United Nations A/C.6/72/SR.1

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Official Records

Distr.: General
23 October 2017

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 October 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Gafoor (Singapore)

Contents

Tribute to the memory of Cherif Bassiouni, legal scholar

Organization of work

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section (dms@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

17-17286 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of Cherif Bassiouni, legal scholar

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.*

Organization of work

2. **The Chair** drew attention to the allocation of agenda items to the Committee, as contained in document A/C.6/72/1, and to the note by the Secretariat entitled "Organization of work" (A/C.6/72/L.1).

3. With regard to agenda item 85, "The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction", he said it was his understanding that, in accordance with the decision by the General Assembly, the Committee wished to establish a working group on the topic, to be chaired by Ms. Duncan Villalobos (Costa Rica), and that the working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations and relevant observers to the General Assembly.

4. *It was so decided.*

5. **The Chair**, referring to agenda item 109, "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", said it was his understanding that, in accordance with the decision by the General Assembly, the Committee wished to establish a working group, to be chaired by Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka), with a view to finalizing a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and continuing to discuss the item included in its agenda by General Assembly resolution 54/110 concerning the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. The working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations and relevant observers to the General Assembly.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **The Chair** drew attention to the proposed timetable for the Committee's work, contained in paragraphs 3 to 6 of the note by the Secretariat entitled "Organization of work" (A/C.6/72/L.1).

8. In accordance with established practice, the proposed programme of work would be applied with flexibility in light of the progress made by the Committee, which would take action on draft resolutions as soon as they were ready for adoption. He encouraged sponsors and coordinators of draft resolutions to use the e-deleGATE portal, which had replaced the *Unite Connections* community of the Sixth Committee, for the presentation of texts of draft resolutions as early as possible and to submit them preferably no later than one week after the completion of the debate of the Committee on each item or the completion of the work of the relevant working group, as the case might be. The taking of action on draft resolutions would always be announced, in advance, in the *Journal of the United Nations*. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

9. *It was so decided.*

10. **The Chair** said that the Committee must allow sufficient time for preparation and consideration of the estimates of expenditure arising from draft resolutions. In that connection, all draft resolutions with financial implications must be submitted to the Fifth Committee by 27 October 2017, except for draft resolutions relating to agenda items scheduled to be considered after that date. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

11. *It was so decided.*

12. **The Chair** stressed that the Committee was required to make full use of the conference resources and facilities made available to it. Although in the past three sessions it had achieved utilization rates above the established benchmark figure of 80 per cent, during the most recent session it had lost 950 minutes because of meetings starting late or ending early.

13. He took it that the Committee wished, as in the past, to follow the practice of the General Assembly in giving precedence on the list of speakers to representatives of regional groups or other groups of States.

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chair** drew attention to paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 59/313, which invited Member States that were aligned with statements already made by the chair of a group of Member States, where possible, to focus additional interventions made in their national capacity on points that had not already been adequately addressed in the statements of the group in question, bearing in mind the sovereign right of each Member State to express its national position. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

16. *It was so decided.*

17. **The Chair** said that the Committee would continue to use the Integrated Sustainable PaperSmart Services (PaperSmart) meetings arrangement as part of its efforts to promote sustainability and cost-effectiveness in its working methods. Delegations were

therefore encouraged to rely on the electronic versions of official documents, as the traditional hard copy distribution of documents and statements had been discontinued. Delegations were asked to send electronic copies of their statements to the PaperSmart team for uploading to the PaperSmart portal and to provide 30 hard copies of their statements for the technical services. The PaperSmart portal would be updated on a daily basis and was freely accessible to anyone with Internet access. It was intended to supplement the existing website of the Committee.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1)

18. **The Chair** drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1), the report of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 on the work of its sixteenth session (A/68/37), and the oral report by the Chair of the Working Group on measures to eliminate international terrorism of the seventieth session, contained in document A/C.6/71/SR.31.

19. **Mr. Khoshroo** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement unequivocally condemned the crime of terrorism and rejected it in all its forms and manifestations, including acts in which States were directly or indirectly involved. Terrorist acts were a flagrant violation of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the right to life. Such acts endangered the territorial integrity and stability of States and national, regional and international security, and had adverse consequences for economic and social development. Terrorism should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation to achieve self-determination and national liberation, nor should it be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and any such association should not be used to justify measures such as profiling of suspects and intrusion on individual privacy. The brutalization of peoples under foreign occupation must be denounced as the gravest form of terrorism, and the use of State power to prevent peoples struggling against such occupation from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination should be condemned.

20. States should honour their obligation under international law and international humanitarian law to combat terrorism by prosecuting or extraditing the perpetrators of terrorist acts and preventing them from organizing, instigating or financing such acts against other States from within or outside their territory. They should themselves refrain from encouraging activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts; allowing their territory to be used for the planning or financing of such acts; and supplying weapons which could be used for that purpose.

21. The Non-Aligned Movement rejected actions, measures and the use or threat of use of force directed against its members by another State under the pretext of combating terrorism or in pursuit of political aims, including by categorizing them directly or indirectly as sponsors of terrorism. It also firmly rejected the unilateral elaboration of lists accusing States of supporting terrorism, a practice that was inconsistent with international law and constituted a form of psychological and political terrorism. States should also refuse to provide political, diplomatic, moral or material support for terrorism and should ensure that the perpetrators, organizers or facilitators of terrorist acts did not abuse refugee or any other legal status.

22. The Movement expressed grave concern over the acute and growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and called on all States to cooperate to address the issue. In that connection, it called upon the United Nations to facilitate capacity-building in accordance with existing mandates to assist States in addressing the problem, upon request. All States that had not yet done so should consider becoming parties to the international instruments on combating terrorism. The Movement was also deeply concerned at the misrepresentation of religions by terrorist groups to justify terrorism and violent extremism. It was essential to address terrorism in an effective and comprehensive manner, including by engaging with community leaders and clerics of all denominations. The Movement strongly condemned the practice of hostage-taking for the purpose of demanding ransom or gaining political concessions and called on all States to cooperate actively in addressing the problem.

23. All States should respect human rights and fundamental freedoms in countering terrorism, in accordance with the rule of law and their obligations under international law. The Non-Aligned Movement called on the Security Council sanctions committees to further streamline their listing and delisting procedures by establishing an independent, transparent and permanent position of Ombudsperson.

24. The Movement reiterated its call for a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response to terrorism and

to identify its root causes. The draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be finalized and, to that end, States should cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. The Movement reaffirmed its support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It encouraged all Member States to collaborate with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The Movement welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and hoped that it would improve coordination of United Nations counter-terrorism activities.

25. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including cases in which States were directly or indirectly involved. More than ever, terrorism represented a serious threat both to Member States, as it disrupted social structures, and to the international community, since it compromised regional stability and global security.

26. It was essential to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, while recognizing that they could not justify terrorist acts. Such conditions included prolonged unresolved conflicts, discrimination, dehumanization of victims, weakening of the rule of law, human rights violations and prolonged social, political, economic and cultural exclusion. Terrorism could be contained effectively only through enhanced international cooperation. Terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism could not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. It was therefore important to foster a culture of peace, condemn all forms of discrimination, and promote respect for cultural, religious and political diversity. Efforts should be made to combat xenophobia, foster inclusion and dispel stereotypes associated with specific cultures, religious or ethnic groups. Responses to the refugee crisis should reduce rather than increase the risk associated with violent extremism.

27. Measures to combat terrorism must always be in strict compliance with international law, as emphasized in General Assembly resolution 70/148 on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. Action taken outside that framework was illegal, unjustifiable and unacceptable. The resolution also underscored the right to privacy, which was a fundamental component of human dignity. CELAC was concerned that State surveillance and the illegal interception of communications, often from abroad, could affect the exercise of human rights. CELAC continued to reject unilateral blacklists that accused States of supporting and sponsoring terrorism; they were incompatible with international law and should be discontinued.

28. The Latin American and Caribbean region had also fallen victim to terrorist acts. The Community strongly condemned such attacks and the circumstances that had enabled those responsible to evade justice. All States should comply without delay with their obligations under international law and cooperate actively in order to bring perpetrators to justice and avoid impunity. The Community emphasized the need to safeguard humanitarian work and expressed concern at recent violations of international humanitarian law, including the use of drones. There was a need to strengthen protection for the victims of terrorism, especially the most vulnerable. In particular, CELAC condemned sexual violence and the destruction of cultural assets, and was deeply concerned at the growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

29. The role of the Ombudsperson for the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities had made the delisting procedure more equitable and transparent. In order to ensure due process, the position of Ombudsperson should be made independent and permanent. Ombudspersons should also be appointed for all the other Security Council sanctions regimes. Sanctions should not be an end in themselves; they were part of a broader strategy aimed at finding peaceful and political solutions.

30. The Community was also concerned at the increasing number of letters sent to the Security Council pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations — most often after the fact — with a view to using force to combat terrorism. The use of force in a manner inconsistent with the Charter was illegal, unjustifiable and unacceptable. Consideration should be given to the possibility of convening an open and transparent debate on the topic.

31. The international community should redouble its efforts to combat the financing of terrorism through such methods as judicial cooperation, legal assistance and information exchange. United Nations entities should continue to assist States in fulfilling their international obligations in that regard.

32. It should also be recognized, however, that terrorism and transnational organized crime were not

intrinsically or necessarily connected. The words "terrorism", "extremism", "radicalization" and "foreign fighters" continued to lack a clear legal definition. The international community could not afford to postpone indefinitely the convening of a high-level conference to overcome the obstacles to the adoption of a comprehensive convention on the subject and resolve the issue of defining terrorist acts. A clear legal regime would strengthen the rule of law in countering international terrorism.

33. CELAC remained committed to working for the prompt finalization of a comprehensive convention. It urged Member States to show flexibility in resolving all pending issues by the end of the current session of the General Assembly, particularly in the context of the relevant working group of the Sixth Committee.

34. **Ms. Aching** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that CARICOM welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would help to coordinate the Organization's counter-terrorism activities. Terrorism was a serious threat to international peace and security and had no respect for territorial borders, race, age, gender or social class. No State was immune from it. The Caribbean region had not been spared and was still awaiting justice for the victims of a terrorist act involving the hijacking and bombing of an aircraft over the Caribbean Sea four decades previously. CARICOM remained deeply concerned at the emergence of new terrorist groups and the surge in the number of foreign terrorist fighters, many of whom were driven by profit or radicalized by subversive materials. In the light of the growing use of social media for incitement and fundraising, it was essential to develop technology to prevent terrorist use of the Internet, detect and control illicit behaviour or content online, and bring the perpetrators to justice. Community outreach programmes would help to challenge terrorist propaganda and disseminate an alternative message.

35. CARICOM was committed to strengthening and implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. At the 38th regular meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, held from 4 to 6 July 2017, participants had worked to develop a CARICOM counter-terrorism strategy, which was now being finalized. CARICOM States were also members of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and were committed to fulfilling their international obligations with respect to combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

36. A comprehensive convention against international terrorism would be the appropriate instrument to prosecute terrorists and strengthen the institutional capacity of States, especially small States, to fight terrorism. The time was long overdue to take more progressive action on the draft comprehensive convention, in particular by resolving outstanding political differences such as those relating to the legal definition of international terrorism and the scope of acts to be included in the instrument. The Community therefore welcomed the decision to establish a working group for that purpose. While CARICOM did not view the holding of a high-level conference on terrorism as a prelude to the finalization of the text of a draft convention, such a conference could be a useful opportunity for Member States to exchange views with representatives of the various counter-terrorism committees and other actors on ways of enhancing implementation of relevant resolutions and treaties. In addition to such measures, national and multilateral action should be taken in order to address the root causes of terrorism and radicalization, including marginalization, high unemployment and inequality. Counter-terrorism measures must be consistent with international law, including human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law.

37. **Ms. Cujo** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that international terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to global peace and security. The international community had a responsibility not only to condemn terrorism but also to take action to prevent and counter it in all its forms and manifestations. The recently established Office of Counter-Terrorism would provide new momentum for United Nations efforts in that regard.

38. The European Union and its member States were fully committed to combating terrorism in Europe and beyond. Their primary objective was to eradicate Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other terrorist groups. Their approach to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism was based on criminal justice and fully complied with international law, including international human rights law.

39. It was crucial to secure forensic evidence for crimes committed by terrorists and to ensure that persons who committed such crimes were held accountable. The European Union commended the Government of Iraq for its willingness to hold ISIL

accountable for its crimes and would continue to support such endeavours. In that connection, it welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), which established an investigative team to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL accountable by collecting, preserving and storing evidence in Iraq of acts perpetrated by the group that might amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

40. The European Union was committed to working with all its partners to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Its priorities included addressing the threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters, preventing and countering radicalization, ensuring that terrorists and their backers were brought to justice, improving information exchange, strengthening the European Counter-Terrorism Centre, cutting off the access of terrorists to firearms and explosives, countering terrorist financing and protecting citizens and critical infrastructure. The European Union had strengthened its legal framework for combating terrorism through the adoption of a sanctions regime targeting ISIL and Al-Qaida. The initiative by the European Union to improve cross-border access to electronic evidence within its territory would improve the capacity of the law enforcement agencies of its member States to investigate and prosecute terrorist crimes.

41. The European Union had adopted a directive criminalizing terrorist financing and the funding of recruitment, training and travel for terrorist purposes. A proposed amendment to the existing European Union directive on money-laundering would enhance transparency with regard to the beneficial ownership of corporate entities and legal arrangements to limit the risk of their being used for terrorist financing. The European Union worked closely with its international partners, including within the framework of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

42. The European Union had enhanced its bilateral and multilateral engagement with States and international organizations to combat Islamist terrorism since the adoption of its regional strategy for Syria and Iraq. Work should be intensified in Africa, Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia, where entire societies were affected by the activities of terrorist groups with links to ISIL. The States members of the European Union aimed to address the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, stabilize areas liberated from ISIL control, cut off financing for ISIL, and counter ISIL messaging, including by preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Long-term efforts to defeat ISIL must also address the political and socioeconomic factors that had facilitated its expansion.

43. The creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism was an important step towards enhancing the role and impact of the United Nations in efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. The European Union and its member States were committed to closely cooperating with the Office to promote a strong and efficient United Nations capable of spearheading global efforts to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism through an approach that balanced the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Those efforts should be consistent with other United Nations policies, in particular in the areas of human rights and development, in order to ensure success on the ground. It was important to take a comprehensive approach that involved young people, women, local communities and victims of terrorism in policy implementation. The European Union called for effective and efficient coordination within the United Nations system and between the United Nations and other international organizations and forums. To that end, it would be necessary to establish more linkages between entities, promote systematic cooperation, and monitor and evaluate the impact of the work of the United Nations.

44. The European Union believed that the work and initiatives of the Global Counterterrorism Forum ought to be better reflected in the United Nations agenda on counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism. It encouraged all Member States to actively participate in the meetings of the Forum and reap the benefits of its work. The European Union would continue to support the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

45. The European Union worked closely with the United Nations in its counter-terrorism activities, in particular by engaging in regular dialogue on the issue and providing funding for counter-terrorism projects initiated or coordinated by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The European Union fully supported the Office of the Ombudsperson for the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and called for the position of Ombudsperson, which had recently become vacant, to be filled immediately by a person with a strong judicial background. The European Union remained committed

to strengthening due process in the sanctions regime and had taken steps to improve its procedures accordingly. It firmly believed that any measures to combat terrorism must be consistent with international law.

46. The European Union called once more on all States Members of the United Nations to ratify and implement all United Nations legal instruments on counter-terrorism. It recognized Member States' efforts towards reaching an agreement on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and remained committed to its successful conclusion. Democracies should never compromise their values in the face of the challenge of terrorism.

47. The resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism that was regularly considered by the Sixth Committee overlapped to a certain extent with the negotiations taking place in the General Assembly in plenary towards a resolution to review implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It would be useful to rationalize the General Assembly's work by considering each of those items biennially in alternation. The previous session had shown that delegations were not willing to consider in the Sixth Committee items that had already been discussed in plenary.

48. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that international terrorism undermined international peace and security, hindered sustainable development and global economic prosperity, and contributed to a general climate of fear and anxiety that disrupted the social fabric of societies. The States members of ASEAN remained deeply concerned about the continuing threat posed by terrorist organizations around the world. They strongly condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and would continue to work tirelessly to eradicate terrorist acts and bring their perpetrators to justice. Combating terrorism was a global undertaking that required a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach led by the United Nations. In that connection, ASEAN fully supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which had promoted cooperation at all levels, in particular with regard to information-sharing, exchange of best practices, technical assistance and capacity-building. ASEAN welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and was committed to developing a close relationship with that Office, with a view to ensuring coordination and coherence in the implementation of the Global Strategy and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

49. ASEAN appreciated the work of CTED, CTITF, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and other relevant United Nations bodies and the assistance they had provided to Member States. It encouraged those mechanisms to redouble their efforts to implement their work plans and programmes. In that context, it was important to avoid duplication of effort by adopting a more integrated and comprehensive approach that would promote consistency and effective cooperation.

50. ASEAN had taken proactive measures to enhance coordination and cooperation within its region and beyond. All 10 of its member States had ratified the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism and were committed to implementing it while taking full account of other relevant international instruments and guidelines, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the relevant United Nations resolutions. ASEAN was working closely with regional partners to combat radicalization and extremism. In that connection, it had organized a number of regional workshops and would be convening a ministerial-level meeting on the rise of radicalization and violent extremism in October 2017. Counter-terrorism instruments were also of interest to the region because they would bolster efforts to address trafficking in persons. The planned strengthening of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime would further enhance the regional response to emerging transnational challenges that had the potential to undermine peace and security.

51. All States had a role to play in addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would effectively address the root causes of violence and thereby promote the establishment of peaceful, just and inclusive societies. In that connection, ASEAN reiterated its position that terrorism could not and must not be associated with any religion, race, nationality or ethnicity, and counter-terrorism efforts must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian and human rights law. The principles of independence, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States were essential to ensure an effective global counter-terrorism response. The delegations of the States members of ASEAN stood ready to work actively with other delegations to refine and improve the global counter-terrorism architecture, and attached importance to the Committee's

deliberations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

52. **Ms. McDougall** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the threat posed by violent extremist groups and ideologies continued to evolve, despite the collective efforts of Member States. Real progress had been made against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, but sustained commitment would be needed to address the expanding influence of ISIL in South-East Asia and the rise in individuals willing to commit low-sophistication attacks on home soil. The travel of foreign terrorist fighters also gave cause for concern.

53. Australia, Canada and New Zealand continued to support the finalization of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. However, pending an agreement on a draft text, Member States should focus on implementing the valuable existing counter-terrorism conventions and Security Council resolutions. The three countries urged Member States to accede to those conventions and incorporate their obligations into domestic law. Furthermore, States should enhance cooperation in the areas of law enforcement and international crime in order to ensure an effective and coordinated international response to terrorism.

54. United Nations sanctions regimes were a vital tool for disrupting terrorist financing. States should ensure that perpetrators of terrorist acts could be held accountable under domestic criminal law, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) concerning terrorist financing, and Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) concerning the recruitment and travel of foreign terrorist fighters. Australia, Canada and New Zealand welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2322 (2016) concerning international judicial and law enforcement cooperation on terrorist-related offences, which highlighted the importance of the exchange of information between States and the investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts.

55. The continuing ability of ISIL to attract supporters underscored the need for the international community to strengthen its efforts to counter violent extremist messaging. Australia, Canada and New Zealand firmly supported the role of the United Nations in countering terrorism and in the implementation of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and looked forward to working with the Office of Counter-Terrorism in that regard. They also commended the work of the Global Counterterrorism Forum in developing guidance on the prevention of extremism online and the protection of soft targets. Community groups and civil society organizations also had a critical role to play in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. In that connection, Australia, Canada and New Zealand had worked with local partners in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali and Nigeria to strengthen community resilience and address the drivers of violent extremism through the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.

56. Australia, Canada and New Zealand remained committed to working closely with other Member States to develop coordinated and effective international responses to terrorism. It was essential to continue to counter extremist messaging while fully respecting the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law.

57. **Ms. Mejía Vélez** (Colombia) said that her delegation fully supported the functions of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Her country condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; it was unacceptable and unjustifiable in any circumstances, could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group. In order for global counter-terrorism efforts to achieve the desired results, they must be in strict compliance with international law.

58. New types of terrorist threats to international peace and security had emerged in recent years, the most serious of which was the dissemination of violent extremist and terrorist ideologies. Addressing such a dangerous and sophisticated phenomenon would require concerted action that and measures that addressed not just judicial, military and security issues but also the underlying problems related to development, good governance, human rights and, in particular, humanitarian concerns. States must pay attention to the victims of terrorism and establish mechanisms to protect and promote their rights, as a key pillar of efforts to defend and promote human rights.

59. Dialogue, cooperation and joint action were a necessary foundation for civilized coexistence free from the scourge of terrorism. The experience of her country was proof that success was possible. After decades of internal conflict in which terrorism was used as a military tactic, negotiations had led to the transformation of the Fuerzas Armadas

Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) into a political party and the entry into force of a temporary bilateral ceasefire between the national armed forces and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional. Her Government appreciated the support it had received from the United Nations in those processes.

60. During the current session of the General Assembly, significant consideration should be given to the matter of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that addressed the deficiencies and omissions of the existing juridical framework, in order to enable coherent international action to be taken to combat the scourge of terrorism.

61. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that his delegation had supported the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General to head that Office, as the reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture would increase the visibility, efficiency, coherence and coordination of the actions of the United Nations system. His Government strongly condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. One of the lessons his country had learned during the two decades it had spent dealing with violence from terrorist groups was that it was crucial to respect the rule of law and human rights in combating terrorism.

62. Terrorism was a serious threat that affected all areas of work of the United Nations, including peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian action. His delegation therefore supported all multilateral action that was part of a systematic, sustained and efficient response to the scourge of terrorism and that respected international law and human rights. In that connection, his delegation was strongly committed to the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and welcomed the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which complemented the Strategy. It was of particular importance to reduce the underlying structural and contextual factors that gave rise to radicalization, to decrease inequality and to strengthen the social fabric, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a member of the Group of Friends on Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism, Peru was promoting a comprehensive approach to combating terrorism and violent extremism, as demonstrated by its role in the drafting of Human Rights Council resolution 30/15, which sought to disassociate religion and culture from violent extremism.

63. The expansion of terrorist groups was partly a result of the financial resources at their disposal. It was therefore necessary to cut off their sources of financing and their links to transnational organized crime, which provided them with funds, human resources and weapons. In that connection, his Government was participating in efforts to improve financial and customs intelligence and to combat money-laundering. It was also important to prevent the Internet, including social networking sites, from being used for terrorist purposes, while simultaneously enhancing the use of information and communications technology to limit, counter and undermine terrorist messaging. Furthermore, it was necessary to prevent terrorist groups from using civil society platforms to recruit members, raise funds, publicize their actions, glorify the commission of criminal acts or incite others to commit terrorist acts, without infringing the rights to freedom of expression and association. His Government had recently adopted a law criminalizing the glorification of terrorism.

64. While the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy represented a step forward, the moral authority of the United Nations was being undermined by the failure to reach an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The General Assembly should be in a position to send an unequivocal message that terrorism was not acceptable under any circumstances. His delegation stood ready to make every effort to find a solution to the issues still outstanding for the conclusion of such a convention. It remained committed to combating terrorism and violent extremism at the national and international levels and wished to reiterate its solidarity with the victims of terrorist attacks.

65. **Mr. Umasankar** (India) said that terrorism threatened the very existence of States and undermined the foundation of the democratic and political social order. The international community must adopt a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism. His Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State-sponsored cross-border terrorism, which no cause or grievance could justify. Terrorism was a deliberate and systematic use of coercive intimidation that was beyond the capacity of ordinary law enforcement agencies to address. Continuing terrorist attacks around the world, many of which were linked to elements beyond the borders of the affected State, demonstrated that no State was immune to the threat of terrorism and that no State could tackle the threat alone.

66. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which it hoped would

strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States. The General Assembly had played a major norm-setting role in the fight against international terrorism, having adopted three important counter-terrorism instruments formulated by the Ad Hoc Committee that it had established in its resolution 51/210. It was regrettable that efforts to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism had become entangled in the issue of the definition of the word "terrorist", and that narrow geopolitical interests continued to prevent meaningful progress towards the adoption of a convention. His delegation supported the text proposed in 2007 by the coordinator of the Ad Hoc Committee.

67. His Government attached particular importance to counter-terrorism cooperation and exchange of information at the international, regional and subregional levels. India was a party to 14 international counter-terrorism instruments.

68. India remained deeply concerned about the financing of terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters, despite numerous Security Council resolutions calling on States to refrain from providing any form of active or passive support to entities or persons involved in such acts, including by suppressing the recruitment of members of terrorist groups and eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists. It strongly condemned direct or indirect financial assistance given by States to terrorist groups or their members to pursue their activities, including for the defence of accused terrorists. India had been at the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts and was part of all major global initiatives on the topic, including FATF.

69. The international community could not afford to deal with terrorist groups or dismantle their infrastructure in a selective manner. Collective efforts must be stepped up, with real-time cooperation to confront the scourge of terrorism decisively. The use of terrorism as an instrument of State policy could not be tolerated.

70. **Mr. Liang** (Singapore) said that terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to global peace and security, caused profound human suffering, disrupted the social fabric of States and undermined the rule of law. Terrorist acts ran counter to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and could not be justified under any circumstances.

71. Terrorism was constantly evolving. Returning foreign terrorist fighters and the increase in attacks by self-radicalized "lone wolf" actors were creating new challenges for security agencies. Addressing terrorism required coordinated and comprehensive strategies at the national and international levels. Singapore had adopted a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy and equipped its security forces with new skills and tools to combat the constantly evolving methods and tactics of terrorist groups, including their use of social media. It had also formed new emergency response teams that were trained to react swiftly in the event of a terrorist incident in order to minimize casualties. In recognition of the pivotal role that the community played in combating terrorism, the Government had launched a national movement, called "SG Secure", in 2016 to train and mobilize communities in the fight against terrorism. His Government was also working alongside religious and inter-faith organizations to counter the spread of extremist ideologies, including through deradicalization programmes.

72. Singapore supported the call for a strong, sustained and coordinated global response to terrorism. It was party to 14 international counter-terrorism agreements and was committed to implementing them. In addition, it had acceded to the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and was working in close cooperation with its regional partners to fight terrorism.

73. His Government worked closely with the members of FATF to identify best practices and enhance international cooperation on combating money-laundering and terrorist financing, and FATF considered the Singaporean legal and institutional framework to be strong. In April 2017, his Government had entered into a partnership with the finance industry to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing, and in August 2017 it had organized a workshop on terrorist financing investigation and prosecution, with assistance from the United States.

74. The United Nations had an important role to play in coordinating the global response to terrorism. His delegation supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. The working group established with a view to finalizing the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism had faced challenges but was making progress. His delegation called on all parties to increase their efforts to bring the discussions on the matter of a draft convention to a successful conclusion.

75. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that certain Member States had placed their extremist ideology and their considerable resources and influence at the disposal of armed terrorist groups in his country. So long as that irresponsible policy

remained in place, the Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy would remain a dead letter, and it would be impossible to adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such States saw foreign terrorist fighters as a weapon to bring down legitimate Governments, destroy economies and kill or displace civilians.

76. The report on foreign terrorist fighters prepared by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to resolution 1526 (2004) (S/2015/358) showed that the fighters who had travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic came from over 100 Member States. They were ordinary civilians who had been indoctrinated with extremist, terrorist Wahhabi ideology at schools and religious centres financed with billions of dollars derived from the sale of oil and gas. Many of those people had been placed under surveillance, particularly in the European Union, until petty political interests had determined that they should be deployed to the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, partly in order to spread terrorism and partly in order to remove them from Western societies. Governments had systematically issued tens of thousands of passports and entry visas to blur the fighters' tracks. Some individuals had transited through as many as five airports on a single journey. Weapons, training camps and operations rooms had been set up in neighbouring countries to assist the fighters, who were now dubbed "the moderate armed opposition", having presumably undergone some form of genetic modification to become Syrian. Their infiltration into Syrian territory had been overseen by intelligence officers from other States, some of which were also buying Syrian and Iraqi oil and antiquities from ISIL and other terrorist organizations. The States in question had turned a blind eye while the Internet and social media were used to disseminate violent extremist ideology, raise funds for terrorists and exchange coded messages regarding future attacks.

77. His country's bitter experience over the previous seven years showed that certain powerful and influential States lacked the political will to combat terrorism. The international community must hold those States accountable; it must cut off the head of the serpent, instead of chasing its tail.

78. **Mr. Dowdall** (United Kingdom) said that the establishment by a number of high-technology companies of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism was of enormous significance, as it marked an increase in the efforts of private-sector companies to address the potential exploitation of their services by terrorists, while maintaining respect for vital freedoms. The initiative involved strong dialogue with Governments. France, Italy and the United Kingdom had hosted the first high-level event with those companies under the auspices of the United Nations on 21 September 2017. His delegation encouraged Member States to consider how they could work with the Forum, including through new and existing regional mechanisms.

79. His delegation welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, by which the United Nations had rightly put prevention at the core of its counter-terrorism efforts. The United Nations must now draw on its unique resources to support States in the implementation of prevention measures. The United Kingdom had funded a number of peacekeeping and strategic communications projects on the prevention of violent extremism and urged other Member States to follow suit.

80. The global mission to raise aviation security standards must continue. It was clear from events of the past year that terrorists continued to plot to bring down aircraft. Work by the International Civil Aviation Organization and others had intensified since the adoption of the unprecedented Security Council resolution 2309 (2016). His delegation encouraged Member States to continue to introduce new measures to improve aviation security, which was vital to the global economy.

81. **Ms. Carnal** (Switzerland) said that her Government strongly condemned terrorism, which continued to spread destruction, fear and hate throughout the world. Respect for international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law, was not only an end in itself but was also crucial to combat terrorism in a sustainable and effective manner. In that connection, her Government was concerned about the impact that national and international counter-terrorism measures were having on the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance to victims of armed conflict and other activities undertaken pursuant to international humanitarian law. It therefore supported the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that guaranteed respect for international humanitarian law.

82. The United Nations played a crucial role in combating terrorism. Her Government was fully committed to implementing the United Nations conventions, protocols and resolutions on counter-terrorism while respecting international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Her delegation welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-

Terrorism and the efforts that would be made under the Under-Secretary-General of that Office to ensure the harmonized and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

83. Switzerland participated actively in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, placing particular emphasis on the implementation of the relevant United Nations instruments. In its capacity as Co-Chair of the Forum's working group on criminal justice and the rule of law, Switzerland intended to focus on the gathering, sharing and use of evidence; administrative measures; juvenile justice; and the role of women in combating terrorism.

84. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Mexico) said that it was unacceptable that 700 terrorist attacks resulting in at least 4,450 fatalities had been perpetrated around the world thus far in 2017. Terrorism had had an unprecedented impact on international peace and security in recent years, making it one of the principal challenges faced by the global community. Collective action, in particular in the area of prevention, must be taken to address the threat. National and regional legal frameworks must continue to be updated to take into account the evolving practices of terrorist groups. In that connection, it should be borne in mind that ideologies that promoted extremism, violence and intolerance were being disseminated at an alarming rate through online platforms, which had a particularly significant effect on young people and women and gave rise to new challenges relating to democracy and human rights.

85. Existing legal frameworks must be fully implemented. The international community had an obligation to work to implement comprehensive strategies to prevent and combat terrorism while respecting international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. Universal human rights must be protected without distinction of religion or region. Failure to respect those obligations led to discrimination, racism and xenophobia and thus undermined the effectiveness of strategies to prevent and counter the violent extremism that led to terrorism. There was no possible solution that did not involve social inclusion and sustainable development.

86. The international community must also continue to work to improve international legal cooperation with regard to the arrest and imprisonment of members of terrorist groups, the exchange of intelligence and the gathering of evidence. Such measures were essential to ensure justice for victims of terrorism, an issue that was often given secondary importance.

87. At the national level, his Government had increased security at its borders, embassies, ports and airports and worked closely with neighbouring States on matters such as the prevention of terrorist financing. It was also working towards the adoption of multilateral measures to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism, while recognizing that there were logistical difficulties in taking action against terrorist groups whose tactics and operations were constantly evolving.

88. His Government, like those of the other States members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, was concerned that the frequent invocation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations as a justification for taking military action against terrorist groups could lead to a de facto increase in exceptions to the general prohibition of the use of force established in Article 2 of the Charter. His delegation therefore called for thorough consideration of that matter by the Sixth Committee.

89. His Government would continue to cooperate on strategies to prevent and combat terrorism through comprehensive action to implement the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, taking into consideration new threats concerning such issues as cybersecurity, maritime security and aviation security. His delegation supported the stronger focus being placed on prevention and, in that connection, welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General as head of that Office. Mexico strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and wished to express its solidarity with Governments and families that had been victims of terrorist attacks.

90. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. The Sudan remained committed to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a comprehensive, sustainable and coordinated manner. It welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which it hoped would help to coordinate the work of the Organization's numerous counter-terrorism entities. In order to protect its values and principles, the international community must continue to support national capacity-building projects and promote the exchange of information and intelligence, including through such entities as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

91. The Sudan had ratified all international conventions on international terrorism, in addition to African and Arab regional conventions on the subject. The Sudan played an active part in the counter-terrorism strategies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States. At the domestic level, one of its most important actions had been to establish a counter-terrorism authority bringing together various ministries and governmental bodies. The national counter-terrorism strategy of the Sudan had been developed in consultation with representatives of civil society, religious leaders and academics. The national plan to counter violent extremism focused on conflict prevention, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, engaging with local communities; empowering young people; fostering gender equality; empowering women, and promoting education, capacity-building, employment and strategic communications, notably through the Internet and social media.

92. Countering terrorism and violent extremism entailed fighting poverty, achieving balanced and sustainable development and strengthening dialogue between the North and the South. Counter-terrorism efforts must be consistent with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant instruments, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law. Any human rights violation would merely be exploited by terrorists for recruitment and propaganda purposes. For the same reason, terrorism should not be linked to any particular religion, ethnic group or nation. His delegation stood ready to participate fully in informal negotiations towards a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

1. **Mr. Lajčák** (Slovakia), President of the General Assembly, said that the promotion of international law lay at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations, as reflected in its Charter, which called for the establishment of conditions under which justice and respect for international law could be maintained. The Committee played an important role in achieving that aim, and its work affected many people around the world. That work could be strengthened by supporting the International Law Commission as the entity responsible for the progressive development of international law. The Commission's approaching seventieth anniversary offered an opportunity to reflect on how best to provide such support. The completion, at the Commission's sixty-ninth session, of the first reading of the draft articles on crimes against humanity was a particularly welcome development. At the same time, it was important to focus on the men and women who were carrying out the work of the United Nations on the ground. Furthermore, the Organization's efforts to build national capacities in line with international standards would be in vain if those leading such efforts failed to respect the rule of law and engaged in corruption, fraud or any other behaviour that ran counter to the Organization's principles. In that regard, the Committee's work on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission remained critical and contributed to ongoing efforts to eradicate sexual abuse and exploitation by such individuals.

2. International law could not be frozen in time. It must adapt to changing circumstances, such as the spread of international terrorism, which was a huge challenge requiring a large-scale and coordinated response. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was a crucial element of that response. In addition, the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be finalized as soon as possible.

3. Strong rule of law was also important for combating terrorism, since it allowed for mechanisms to counter terrorist recruitment and financing. Strong institutions and justice systems were needed in order to hold perpetrators accountable. Conversely, the absence of the rule of law was often a root cause of conflict, which itself created a breeding ground for terrorism. Furthermore, the rule of law must be integrated across all three pillars of the Organization's work: without it, none of the Sustainable Development Goals could be achieved; no person's rights could be fully protected; and no peace could last. Lastly, continued discussion of the Committee's working methods would contribute to the revitalization of the General Assembly. He and his team stood ready to support the Committee in its important work.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1)

4. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that the African States condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism, wherever, by whomever and against whomever committed. The Group welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and encouraged the Under-Secretary-General newly appointed to head the Office to work closely with the African Union Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, who also served as the Director of the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism. The Group reiterated the importance of concluding a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and remained willing to work with others to achieve consensus on the draft convention and to continue refining the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to decide on an international response to terrorism should be given serious consideration.

5. Africa had long recognized the need for concrete measures to combat terrorism. The African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism had been established by the African Union as a forum for regional and international cooperation on combating terrorism in Africa and had implemented many programmes aimed at enhancing national counter-terrorism capacities. The African Union had also encouraged the development of regional processes such as the Nouakchott Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan Region. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) also played an important role in fighting terrorism. Furthermore, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union had emphasized the need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism through comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies that empowered civil society organizations, religious leaders, women and vulnerable groups and covered not only security and law enforcement but also poverty eradication, job creation and development. Other

measures were aimed at countering radicalization, improving border control and preventing the financing of terrorism. With regard to legal measures, the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism had entered into force in 2002 and a plan of action for its implementation had been adopted in the same year. In 2011 an African model law on counter-terrorism had been adopted with a view to assisting African Union member States in strengthening their national legislation in that area.

6. The financing of terrorism was a matter of great concern, particularly as one of its main sources was the payment of ransoms. The Group therefore urged Member States to cooperate in addressing the issue of payment of ransoms to terrorist groups. In view of the need to promote international cooperation and assistance, the Group welcomed the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, developed with the assistance of the United States, and the Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on strengthening the legal regime against terrorism in West and Central Africa. Africa always endeavoured to comply with its international counter-terrorism obligations, but many African States were hamstrung by inadequate resources and capacities, and they appealed to the international community for assistance in that regard.

7. The conditions conducive to terrorism and violent extremism had to be addressed globally. A more peaceful and just world would go a long way towards delegitimizing terrorist narratives.

8. **Mr. Mounsaveng** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), reiterating his country's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, said that in recent attacks terrorists had employed tools, such as knives and trucks, that were easily accessible and commonly used in daily life. Such attacks were particularly difficult to prevent and could adversely affect the proper functioning of society. His delegation therefore supported the international community's efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. In order for those efforts to be more effective, the root causes of terrorism must be addressed.

9. The Lao People's Democratic Republic played an active role in regional counter-terrorism cooperation frameworks and remained committed to implementing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Convention on Counter-Terrorism and other measures set out in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025. It had also ratified 13 international counter-terrorism conventions and was taking action to fulfil its obligations both under those conventions and under the relevant Security Council resolutions. It welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would strengthen the Organization's support for Member States in their implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

10. **Mr.** Mohammed **Al-Thani** (Qatar) said that Qatar condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. A comprehensive convention on international terrorism was needed more than ever, and Qatar would continue to be an active participant in negotiations towards its elaboration. Such an instrument must provide a clear definition of terrorism, which could not be linked to any particular ethnic group or religion or culture. A distinction must be made between terrorism and legitimate self-defence by peoples subjected to foreign domination.

11. International efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy were being hampered by such factors as human rights violations, marginalization, discrimination, the manufacturing of crises to cover up States' internal failures and the politicization of counter-terrorism efforts. States often invoked terrorism in the context of a political dispute, or to repress political opponents, or to tarnish the image of other countries, isolate them and undermine their sovereignty. That practice was inconsistent with the Strategy and must be addressed. Counter-terrorism must not be used as a pretext to pressure States for political purposes.

12. Qatar had continued to maintain international partnerships to eradicate terrorism and confront violent ideologies. It had ratified most of the counter-terrorism instruments and taken measures to fulfil all of its obligations, particularly by enforcing sanctions against individuals and entities on the Security Council's sanctions list. Qatar was working closely with the Security Council committees and the experts assisting them, and had donated $250,000 to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in February 2017. In September 2017, it had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Silatech Foundation and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to tackle violent extremism and the roots of terrorism in the region. Qatar had concluded numerous bilateral agreements on counter-terrorism, including one with the United States of America in July 2017. It was a member of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and was host to a United States Air Force base. Qatar was also a founding member and prominent contributor to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. It continued to strengthen its legislative framework for combating terrorism, including money-laundering and cybercrime in relation to terrorism, and

was monitoring several associations in the country to ensure that they did not support terrorism in any way.

13. **Mr. Hasebe** (Japan) said that, despite the adoption in December 2016 of General Assembly resolution 71/151 on measures to eliminate international terrorism, terrorist attacks continued to occur around the world. Japan strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and was firmly committed to fighting it. The threat required urgent and coordinated international efforts, with the United Nations playing a critical role. Japan welcomed the recent establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and hoped that it would be effective in coordinating the counter-terrorism activities of United Nations agencies. It also welcomed the adoption of a series of counter-terrorism resolutions by the Security Council, including resolutions 2370 (2017) and 2368 (2017), and had long stressed the importance of their full implementation. In that context, it was providing 45 billion yen over three years to boost counter-terrorism support in Asia and to help train 2,000 counter-terrorism personnel, with a focus on the reinforcement of border security, capacity-building for law enforcement agencies and the promotion of tolerant societies through poverty alleviation and educational and vocational support.

14. As the host for the 2019 Rugby World Cup and the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Japan was strengthening various security measures, including police guidance for private businesses that handled swords, firearms and explosives, and other chemicals that could potentially be used to make bombs. It also attached great importance to the development of a strong legal counter-terrorism regime. As a State party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and two of the Protocols thereto, Japan would cooperate with other States parties to combat such crime, including terrorism, through investigation assistance and extradition.

15. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that his country welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and pledged to cooperate fully with that Office in carrying out its work. Despite the efforts of the international community, terrorist attacks continued to take place around the world. He reiterated his country's firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, for which there could be no justification. Furthermore, terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

16. It was vital for Member States to implement all four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including the prevention of violent extremism leading to terrorism, and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in particular resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2253 (2015). The United Nations must support States in that endeavour by providing training and guidance and helping them modernize their judicial, criminal and security systems for combating terrorism. Morocco welcomed the efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to assess States' responses and needs in that regard.

17. In response to the growing phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters moving across borders to reach various hotspots or to destabilize States, thereby violating their sovereignty and territorial integrity, Morocco had hosted several meetings on border security, including the second Regional Ministerial Conference on Border Security for the countries of the Sahel, West Africa and the Maghreb. The return of such fighters to their countries of origin or residence or their dispersal following military defeats was equally worrying. Their constantly changing methods, their use of information technology and social media to recruit and radicalize young people and push them towards violent extremism and terrorism, and their links with organized crime and trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings required a response at the bilateral, regional and subregional levels, and also a global response through the United Nations and other international forums. No country was safe from terrorism or capable of fighting it alone.

18. The Global Counterterrorism Forum, currently chaired by Morocco and the Netherlands, had adopted several important documents, such as the Hague-Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practices for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon, the Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context and the Zurich-London Recommendations on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism Online. The Forum invited the United Nations to participate in its meetings with a view to exchanging views and practices on countering terrorism and violent extremism.

19. At the national level, Morocco had adopted a strategy that included the optimization of the legal and security framework for combating terrorism, which had led to the dismantling of several terrorist cells; the launch of a national human development initiative to prevent social problems, exclusion and instability; and religious reforms, including the training of young preachers on the precepts of Islam, based on dialogue, tolerance, moderation, coexistence and respect, which the Muslim religion advocated, and programmes to deradicalize, rehabilitate and reintegrate foreign

terrorist fighters and counter the narratives of radicalization and extremism. It had shared that experience with other countries in Africa, Europe and the Arab world.

20. **Mr. Essa** (Libya), reiterating his country's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestation, said that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, race, ethnic group or community. The international community must work together to tackle it while respecting human rights, State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. It should redouble its efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; terrorism could not be definitively eliminated by military means alone. Swift and effective action would be needed in order to prevent recruitment and prosecute terrorists and their sponsors, particularly by combating organized crime, human trafficking and kidnap-for-ransom; stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; preventing arms smuggling; monitoring and closing down websites and media outlets that promoted a culture of hate; and fostering stability in conflict-ridden States.

21. His own country's instability had created a hotbed for extremist and terrorist groups from various countries. Although the groups had now been driven out of several cities, they had infiltrated other areas and continued to pose a threat. For the sake of international peace and security, they must be eradicated once and for all. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2214 (2015), the international community should facilitate the Libyan Government's access to the arms and related materiel that it needed in order to confront the terrorist organizations.

22. Libya reiterated its support for the convening of a high-level conference under United Nations auspices to examine the issue of terrorism, and it called on all countries to finalize the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The latter should include a clear definition of terrorism and address its root causes and the conditions that allowed it to proliferate. It should also make a distinction between criminal terrorist acts and the legitimate struggle of peoples for the right to self-determination and against foreign occupation.

23. **Mr. Shi** Xiaobin (China) said that, although international cooperation against terrorism had yielded positive results, terrorist attacks continued unabated; the threat from both global and domestic terrorism was increasing, with a rise in the number of improvised attacks on diverse targets and the spread of terrorist ideologies in cyberspace. Terrorism knew no borders; for the sake of humanity's future, it required a global response.

24. The international community must seek greater consensus and synergy in its efforts to combat terrorism. All parties should unequivocally oppose terrorism in all its forms and manifestations while rejecting double standards and any attempt to link terrorism with any specific ethnicity or religion. Furthermore, a comprehensive approach that addressed both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism was needed. States must crack down on the recruitment and movement of terrorists, cut off their financing channels and curb the abuse of social media and other information technology platforms by terrorist entities. At the same time, they must work to eradicate poverty, address development needs, promote education and cultural development, facilitate dialogue among civilizations and develop international relations based on win-win cooperation, so as to eliminate the breeding grounds for terrorism. The United Nations, including the Security Council, should play a leading role in such efforts. The potential of the Organization's counter-terrorism entities should be fully tapped, their coordination and division of labour improved and their resources consolidated. Counter-terrorism efforts must also be in compliance with international law, in particular its rules concerning the use of force and the punishment of crime. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be upheld and the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States respected. Efforts to finalize the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be accelerated.

25. Efforts in China to combat East Turkestan terrorists formed part of the international fight against terrorism. China hoped for the international community's continued support in those efforts. Over the past year, it had held consultations with several countries on matters of counter-terrorism and security and had continued to participate in counter-terrorism cooperation through a number of multilateral frameworks. It had played an active part in the establishment of the Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Counter-Terrorism Working Group and had hosted the Group's second meeting. It had also hosted the first China-Russian Federation-India informal meeting on counter-terrorism and the second symposium on combating cyberterrorism of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. At the Astana summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in June 2017, member States had issued a statement on joint efforts to combat

international terrorism and had signed the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism.

26. China would continue to promote international cooperation against terrorism in a spirit of mutual respect and on the basis of equality with a view to maintaining world peace, security and stability.

27. **Ms. Kuret** (Slovenia) said that, in order to achieve long-term results, action against the threat of terrorism must be united and coherent. It was important to address the conditions conducive to terrorism through programmes aimed at preventing radicalization and extremism and establishing a favourable social, political and economic environment. Young people, though susceptible to radicalization, could also drive the positive transformation of societies. Education was particularly important in that regard.

28. Regional cooperation was vital in order to combat the threat of terrorism. Of particular concern to Slovenia was the fact that the Western Balkans, a possible transit route between Europe and Syria and Iraq, was being targeted by ISIL in an effort to establish new areas for recruitment and logistical bases beyond the Middle East and North Africa. Her Government had proposed the Western Balkans Counter-Terrorism Initiative as part of the Integrative Internal Security Governance concept, both endorsed by the Council of the European Union, with a view to cooperating on security matters and preventing violent extremism, terrorism and serious and organized crime. It had also initiated an awareness-raising and capacity-building project for practitioners dealing with radicalization issues in the Western Balkan region, aimed at improving the exchange of intelligence, introducing uniform international standards for the investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and ensuring the secure and lawful exchange of personal data. At the national level, amendments had been made to the Slovenian Criminal Code to toughen its provisions on terrorism, and a new law to prevent money-laundering and terrorist financing had been adopted.

29. She reiterated her Government's support for the newly established Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would strengthen the Organization's action against terrorism through a balanced approach to the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Lastly, her delegation hoped for a successful conclusion to the work on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

30. **Mr. Tiare** (Burkina Faso), reiterating his country's condemnation of terrorism, said that Burkina Faso had been the victim of several terrorist acts since 2014, including attacks on its defence and security forces, kidnappings, bombings and indiscriminate attacks on restaurants and hotels. His Government had undertaken a number of legal and institutional reforms aimed at preventing and suppressing terrorism while ensuring respect for human rights. They included a new counter-terrorism law and the establishment and strengthening of specialized judicial and law enforcement services. The country had also received capacity-building support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

31. Conscious that poverty was one of the root causes of terrorism and that security-related measures to combat terrorism would be successful only in a context of economic stability, his Government had recently adopted an emergency programme for the Sahel for the period 2017-2020. Under the programme, $750 million would be invested in expanding access to basic social services, improving governance and boosting the security of people and property across the region.

32. National counter-terrorism efforts would be successful only if they formed part of a subregional, regional and global approach. For that reason, Burkina Faso had played an active role in the establishment of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) and its joint force, with a view to combating terrorism in all five countries concerned, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. He called on the international community to support the joint force, which served as a bulwark against the spread of terrorism, radicalization and transnational organized crime to the rest of the world, particularly Europe. Burkina Faso looked forward to the planning conference referred to in Security Council resolution 2359 (2017), which would take place in Brussels in December 2017. At the subregional level, one of the most effective means of countering the terrorist threat was cross-border cooperation in both judicial and security matters.

33. His delegation looked forward with an increasing sense of urgency to the finalization and adoption of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would take into account all aspects of terrorism and would include a definition of the phenomenon. With regard to the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, greater attention needed to be given to prevention and the root causes of terrorism, radicalization, violent extremism and irregular migration. His delegation therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A70/674).

34. **Mr. Chandrtri** (Thailand) said that his country condemned all forms and manifestations of terrorism and was committed to playing an active role at the national, regional and international levels in efforts to combat it. Thailand had been steadily strengthening its domestic legal framework to combat terrorism and had adopted a number of measures in line with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) to counter the financing of terrorism. In that regard, its Prevention and Suppression of Terrorist Financing and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act had come into force in December 2016.

35. Thailand remained committed to the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism and would continue to strengthen its cooperation with other ASEAN member States in that regard. Cooperation at the international level, supported by strong international legal frameworks, was also key to the suppression of terrorism. Thailand had ratified nine international counter-terrorism instruments and intended to ratify the remaining ones. In particular, it was in the process of becoming a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Amendment thereto and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol thereto. Its National Security Policy 2015-2021 incorporated various counter-terrorism strategies. Thailand stood ready to translate the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy into practice and supported the work of the various United Nations entities, including the newly established Office of Counter-Terrorism, to that end.

36. Finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism would contribute significantly to the global fight against terrorism. His delegation therefore called on all States to step up their efforts to that end and ensure that the convention contained a clear and precise definition of terrorism. More importantly, the root causes of terrorism must be addressed and collective efforts must be made to eradicate poverty, promote social inclusion, ensure respect for basic rights, improve access to resources, and foster interfaith dialogue and tolerance with a view to achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

37. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador) said that his country condemned all acts of terrorism and was committed to the implementation of all necessary measures to prevent, investigate and prosecute those acts. El Salvador had ratified the majority of the conventions on terrorism, including those aimed at preventing its financing. In 2006 it had brought into force a national law designed to ensure the prevention, investigation, punishment and elimination of terrorist offences, terrorist financing and other related activities. In the prosecution of terrorist offences, it was important to ensure that State institutions were strengthened. Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General of El Salvador had expanded training activities at the national and international levels in a number of areas, including the prevention of terrorism and its financing and the provision of assistance to victims. At the regional level, El Salvador had participated in projects coordinated by UNODC, such as a training course in March 2017 on terrorism at international airports.

38. The need for counter-terrorism measures that were consistent with the rule of law was all the greater because terrorism threatened international peace and security and social and economic development. El Salvador was open to the strengthening of cooperation mechanisms and other measures, such as the drafting of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Measures to combat international terrorism must be in strict compliance with the law, including international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations, and with international standards for the protection of human rights.

39. **Mr. Salam** (Lebanon) said that his country remained scarred and torn by terror, which it continued to oppose, in accordance with its commitments under international law. His Government's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations remained firm and absolute; terrorism should never be associated with any nationality, religion, civilization or ethnic group, but only with savagery. In the context of the working group on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, it was important to define the word. It was often used loosely and misapplied to the exercise of the right to resist foreign occupation and the right to self-determination, which were embedded in international law, while criminal acts committed by settlers illegally occupying the territory of a foreign State were not qualified as acts of terrorism but merely as violent acts. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the new Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would better assist Member States in their implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

40. **Mr. Fintakpa Lamega** (Togo) said that, in view of the rise in international terrorism throughout the world and even before the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/151, calling on States to become parties to the various international legal instruments on the prevention and suppression of

international terrorism. Togo had acceded thereto. In addition, and in order to put into effect those instruments, it had recently adopted a new criminal code. His Government was also engaged in the fight against transnational crime and had accordingly taken action to combat money-laundering, in particular by setting up a financial intelligence unit, in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force and the West African Economic and Monetary Union, and had enacted two laws as a basis for its work.

41. The international community needed more than ever to take concerted action to combat the continuing threat of terrorism, which knew no borders and was carried out indiscriminately. No country could achieve its development goals or ensure the well-being of its population without an increased effort by all Member States to preserve peace and security in the world. Togo, for its part, had reaffirmed its steadfast opposition to fundamentalism and violent extremism and called for greater regional cooperation and intelligence-sharing. In that spirit, the national police authorities of 15 African countries had met earlier in the year to consult with each other on the steps taken by their respective countries to prevent terrorist acts, including action to neutralize funding sources for terrorist organizations and extremist groups. His Government remained convinced that there could be no justification for any act of terrorism and condemned in the firmest possible terms all forms and manifestations of terrorism, however and by whomsoever committed. Togo accordingly welcomed the establishment at the current session of a working group to finalize the draft comprehensive convention against international terrorism and to consider the question of convening a high-level conference on the subject under the auspices of the United Nations.

42. *Ms. McDougall (Australia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

43. **Ms. Argüello González** (Nicaragua), reiterating her country's firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism, of which Nicaragua, its people and its Government had been victims, said that her delegation called for efforts to combat the financing of terrorism, whether by States or by individuals. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and could not be justified on such grounds.

44. Nicaragua was deeply concerned about the wars being waged under the banner of "war on terrorism", causing deaths, violations of the human rights of millions of people and mass refugee flows. Her delegation wished to express its solidarity with all victims of terrorist attacks, including the hundreds that had occurred over the past year. Condemnations of terrorism must go beyond words and be reflected in concrete measures to prosecute, bring to justice and extradite those committing terrorist acts; above all, such acts must not to be supported or financed through the application of double standards, whereby groups whose intention was to overthrow legitimately constituted governments were viewed as "moderate armed opposition".

45. Her delegation reaffirmed Nicaragua's readiness to make every effort to help conclude a convention on terrorism and called on all Member States to demonstrate flexibility towards that end. Nicaragua also remained firmly committed to the integrated implementation of the four pillars of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which should be pursued by States fully and transparently, and had therefore participated actively in the fifth two-yearly review of the Strategy in 2016. Her Government would continue to serve the ideals of the motherland and of liberty and would make every effort to promote stability, security and peace as preconditions for development.

46. **Mr. Heumann** (Israel) said that his delegation hoped that, in the fight against terrorism, the related new appointments within the United Nations would allow the Organization to have a leading voice and result in greater collaboration. Israel had not been spared from the trail of death, blood and grief left across the globe by terrorists, who were quick to avail themselves of new tools to that end. The Internet, in particular, through social media and online chat rooms, had become a platform for the promotion of terrorism and violent extremism; his country had accordingly become deeply involved in combating such abuses and was working with the international community to find creative solutions to that global threat.

47. In its unending fight against the relentless terror attacks that its citizens had endured for decades on all fronts, on an almost daily basis, Israel had continued to seek legal tools to combat terrorism effectively, in line with its domestic and international obligations. It had recently adopted a new, comprehensive counter-terrorism law to address emerging threats while maintaining its constant commitment to the rule of law; the new law was unified, consistent and precise and offered a holistic, "one-stop shop" approach to combating terrorism. His country's democratic norms and obligations remained paramount, even at the cost of a more difficult fight against terrorism. His delegation recognized the importance of international cooperation and the role of the United Nations in that

fight and supported the development of a comprehensive convention that would not admit any justification for any form or manifestation of terrorism. There must be a "zero-tolerance" approach to terrorism, which could not be excused under the guise of martyrdom, so-called acts of liberation, or in the name of any cause. While Israel appreciated the efforts made by Member States in the intersessional period to reach a compromise in that regard, there could be no compromise for the sake of consensus on any text that would exclude any terrorist organization or cause, whatever the alleged justification.

48. **Mr. Lisuchenko** (Ukraine) said that his delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism within the United Nations; it could be expected to enhance coherence and leadership and mainstream counter-terrorism efforts within the system and contribute to the balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The new Office should work closely with the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council to identify new trends, challenges and gaps in the counter-terrorism field, monitor the fulfilment by States of their obligations and facilitate the delivery of technical aid. The root causes of terrorism must be addressed through efforts to counter terrorist ideologies, like the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, launched recently by major high-technology companies.

49. The fight against terrorism must be a daily pursuit in every State, as it was in Ukraine, which was actively contributing to global and regional efforts to prevent the recruitment and flow of foreign terrorist fighters. With the help of its international partners, it had identified and dismantled 17 transfer points used for the accommodation of such fighters and detained more than 60 members and supporters of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). As a member of the Security Council, Ukraine had also contributed to the advancement of new communication technology standards by raising the issue of the protection of critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks, resulting in the adoption of Security Council resolution 2341 (2017).

50. The international community should ensure that those held liable for terrorist acts were not just the direct perpetrators of such acts but also the organizers and mentors of those perpetrators, especially if such activities were carried out at the State level. His country had had had a bitter experience in countering terrorism that had been fuelled by external support for terrorist groups and organizations. For instance, the Russian Federation had used terrorism as one of the tools of its hybrid aggression against Ukraine, thereby violating many of its fundamental obligations under international law, namely, the obligations to refrain from providing any form of support to terrorists, to eliminate the supply of weapons to terrorists, to suppress the recruitment and movement of foreign terrorist fighters and to prohibit terrorist incitement.

51. The increase in State-sponsored terrorism throughout the world was detrimental to global counter-terrorism efforts. His delegation was particularly concerned about the difficulty of holding States accountable for the financing of terrorism and believed that no effort should be spared to that end. Ukraine had already led the way in its suit against the Russian Federation before the International Court of Justice, resulting in the finding by the Court, in its order of 19 April 2017, that the case was plausible and that a State could be held accountable for violating the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The need to hold to account not only individuals and organizations but also States responsible for organizing, encouraging, providing training or otherwise directly or indirectly supporting terrorist activities should be duly reflected in the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would be an important addition to the existing international legal counter-terrorism framework.

52. **Ms. Granda Averhoff** (Cuba), reiterating her country's unwavering resolve to combat terrorism and its condemnation of terrorist acts, methods and practices in all their forms and manifestations, whenever and by whomsoever committed, irrespective of their motivation, including in cases in which States were directly or indirectly involved, said that Cuba likewise condemned any action to encourage, support, finance or conceal any terrorist act, method or practice. Terrorism could not be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and must be combated through a holistic approach, combining direct confrontation, prevention and measures to eradicate its root causes. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a new United Nations counter-terrorism structure; it should focus on the most effective implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and should be based on full respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations; it should in no case be a mechanism for supervising States.

53. The harmful practices whereby certain States financed, supported or promoted subversive acts aimed at "regime change" and disseminated messages of intolerance and enmity towards other peoples, cultures and political systems with the help of modern

information and communications technologies were violations of the Charter and international law. Cuba reiterated its condemnation of unilateral acts by certain States that took it upon themselves to certify conduct and to establish politically motivated lists, in violation of international law. Such acts undermined the central authority of the General Assembly in combating terrorism. The international community could not accept that, under the banner of a so-called fight against terrorism, certain States carried out acts of aggression, directly or indirectly, against sovereign peoples and committed flagrant violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Cuba also firmly rejected the manipulation of the sensitive issue of international terrorism as an instrument for use against any country.

54. Cuba was a party to 18 international conventions on terrorism, and it reaffirmed its determination to continue working to strengthen the central role of the United Nations in the adoption of measures and the elaboration of a broad legal framework to fight that scourge. It reiterated its support for the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that would fill in existing legal lacunae, and it was in favour of convening an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to provide an organized response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

55. In defence of its independence, sovereignty and dignity, Cuba had for decades suffered the consequences of terrorist acts that had left 3,478 people dead and 2,099 disabled. The terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, who had masterminded the explosion in mid-flight of a Cubana de Aviación airliner 41 years earlier, resulting in the death of 73 persons, was still at large. On 6 October, Cuba would commemorate with deep sorrow another anniversary of that crime.

56. Cuba had never participated in the organization, financing or commission of an act of terrorism against any country, and it had never assisted and would never assist acts of international terrorism. Cuban territory had never been used and never would be used to organize, finance or commit terrorist acts against any country. Her Government reiterated its support for multilateral and bilateral cooperation to counter international terrorism and was determined to work with all countries on preventing and suppressing terrorist acts, wherever they were committed.

57. **Mr. Sparber** (Liechtenstein) said that his country condemned all acts of terrorism, irrespective of their motivation, wherever and by whomever perpetrated, and remained committed to the international fight against terrorism in all its aspects, including through cooperation with the United Nations. It had ratified all United Nations counter-terrorism instruments and, as a member of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions, would continue to promote the effectiveness and legitimacy of terrorism-related sanctions regimes. His delegation particularly valued the work of the Office of the Ombudsperson of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and looked forward to the early appointment of a new Ombudsperson.

58. Although they were often no more than an afterthought, measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law must be the basis for the fight against terrorism. Governments actively involved in that fight should beware of contributing to outcomes opposed to the values they were seeking to uphold. Too broad a definition of terrorism could jeopardize the right to freedom of expression and information; mass surveillance could undermine the right to privacy. International humanitarian law continued to be flouted by various parties to armed conflicts, including non-State actors, at the risk of encouraging perceptions of injustice that could facilitate radicalization and the recruitment of terrorists. Governments must abide by the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality.

59. The international response to terrorism must be strengthened, with the United Nations at its centre. The respective roles of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat were complementary and mutually reinforcing. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism in the interests of streamlining the counter-terrorism architecture of the United Nations; it would lend itself to a more balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy across its four pillars. By focusing on the prevention of violent extremism, it could make an important contribution to the Secretary-General's prevention agenda and to bringing human rights to the forefront of the United Nations response to terrorism.

60. The Sixth Committee had also made important contributions, in particular by drafting numerous international conventions in the area of counter-terrorism, notably the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the 2005 Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Following those efforts, the Committee should streamline its work accordingly and avoid a duplication

of its discussions in various formats. His delegation therefore reiterated its call to discuss a comprehensive convention on counter-terrorism in only in the plenary, and remove the item from the Committee's agenda or, if that were not possible, take up the suggestion by the European Union to discuss it only every two years.

61. **Mr. Shingiro** (Burundi) said that his delegation added its voice to those of other delegations that condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; terrorism was an odious violation of positive law and a threat to international peace and security, as well as to the economic and social development of communities. Burundi welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and pledged to cooperate fully with it. It was in the interest of all nations to join together in combating the scourge of terrorism globally, regionally and nationally: not one week passed without a terrorist act being committed somewhere in the world and in every continent, blindly striking innocent people.

62. Terrorism could not be associated with any particular region, culture, religion, nationality or race. It was transnational and was not rooted in any one State or locality; it sprung up wherever conditions lent themselves to it. His delegation called for a dialogue between cultures and civilizations and respect for international law and the relevant regional conventions, failing which there was a danger of offering fertile ground and a justification for the violent extremism that was thus continuing to develop in the contemporary world. Indeed, as the terrorist threat shifted away from the Middle East towards Africa and other regions, it was clear that the scourge was due to the interaction of pre-existent political, economic, social and security factors, compounded by military interventionism.

63. If terrorism was to be combated effectively, there had to be greater international cooperation through the exchange of information, the cutting off of its sources of financing, including ransoms, and border controls to stem the flow of foreign fighters. The United Nations offered a suitable platform for a concerted discussion on international terrorism with a view to collective action. His delegation also recognized the urgent need to adopt a comprehensive convention that would provide a multilateral framework for combating the scourge, since the absence of a definition of terrorism left terrorist groups with room to become more firmly entrenched. It was also important to support the implementation of the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, avoiding so far as possible a selective approach. Lastly, it had become clear that military action alone could not eliminate the phenomenon completely and that, if it did not go hand in hand with civil action, could produce instability and foster terrorism.

64. True to the commitments that it had assumed under the multilateral and regional conventions to which it was a party, which included the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the 2005 Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, Burundi maintained its firm resolve to collaborate with the rest of the international community in combating the pernicious threat posed by terrorism to international peace and security.

65. **Ms. Gaye** (Senegal) said that the ultimate aim of terrorist attacks was to create a climate of instability through collective psychosis. Terrorism was criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomsoever committed, and her delegation condemned it in all its forms and manifestations while rejecting any link between terrorism and Islam: Muslims themselves were among its victims. It was becoming increasingly imperative to combat terrorism synergistically, but also to ensure that all the provisions of the relevant resolutions and recommendations of the various bodies tasked with preventing and combating it were strictly put into effect, in particular through action to prevent the financing of terrorism and step up cooperation among States. While there had been some progress, efforts were still needed to stem the flow of funding generated by ransoms and transnational crime. Member States must do more to share information but also to secure the effective involvement of all counter-terrorism bodies in addressing the issue of foreign terrorist fighters.

66. It was high time for all States, without exception, to enact legislation to fill the gaps in the law that allowed terrorists to prepare and increasingly carry out terrorist acts. Senegal, for its part, while not taking emergency measures, had introduced specific laws and mechanisms to give full effect to international and regional conventions aimed at combating terrorism and the financing of terrorism. Her Government had set up a financial intelligence unit that was fully engaged in its new mission of combating such financing, with particular attention to money-laundering, as well as a counter-terrorism unit which had already secured a number of arrests that augured well for its effectiveness. The machinery put in place could not be fully successful, however, without effective coordination between the police and the judiciary and full cooperation between all agencies involved.

67. Her delegation welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, which had an essential role to play in helping Member States to implement the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy while ensuring better coordination and coherence throughout the United Nations system. There was still a long way to go to defeat terrorism, but, through perseverance, cooperation, a joint strategy and shared action, success would be achieved. It was therefore all the more important for Member States to reach an agreement on an international convention to combat terrorism. The planned high-level conference on the subject was for that reason a beacon of hope which should lead to the adoption of an international convention supported by the entire international community.

68. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that, while terrorist networks such as ISIL and Al-Qaida and "home-grown terrorists" remained a global security threat, the fight against ISIL was succeeding, thanks to the efforts of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. Norway was playing an important role in that fight, both militarily and through the provision of aid and support. The international community had a critical responsibility to respond to the tremendous need for humanitarian aid by providing support and relief.

69. Preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism were key priorities for the Norwegian Government, which had adopted a whole-of-society approach for the purpose, engaging civil society, youth, women, faith leaders and local communities. In 2015, the Government had launched a white paper entitled "Global security challenges in Norway's foreign policy", with the aim of strengthening the country's contribution to international stability, peace and development. It had recommended the inclusion of a whole-of-society approach in the mandate of the recently established United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. The Office should give greater coherence and provide for better strategic leadership and external and internal communication and enhance the United Nations system's ability to implement all four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, while establishing an appropriate balance between them. At the same time, the root causes and upstream factors of violent extremism must be addressed and responses to them must be based on the rule of law.

70. Countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism called for partnerships with civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders, with the full and effective participation of women at all levels of society. No one must be trapped in impoverished communities where there was no order and no path for advancement. Young people were an integral part of the solution; their voices must be heard and respected. Injustice and the experience of injustice must be addressed.

71. The underlying conditions that drove individuals to radicalize to violence and join violent extremist groups must likewise be addressed; that was purpose of the Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism, co-chaired by his country and Jordan. The Group would be seeking to provide support within the United Nations system to the prevention of violent extremism, share lessons learned and relevant best practices and provide a forum for discussion and coordination between United Nations entities, Governments, civil society and other stakeholders.

72. **Mr. Tajuddin** (Malaysia) said that his country condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism; they were unacceptable; they had tarnished the true image of Islam and were against its teachings. Malaysia continued to consider it vital for the root causes of terrorism to be addressed effectively for a comprehensive response: only if the conditions conducive to violent extremism and terrorism, including unresolved conflicts, were effectively tackled would there be any success in defeating violent extremism and terrorism. His delegation shared the international community's concern about the urgent need to accelerate global efforts to combat terrorism. It was imperative for States to engage in international cooperation to ensure mutual assistance in times of need and keep abreast of the changing face of terrorism through the exchange of information. Malaysia therefore looked forward to the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to continuing during the current session to discuss the question of convening a high-level conference on the subject under the auspices of the United Nations.

73. Prevention was the most effective way of addressing the threat of terrorism. His country had accordingly enacted a number of laws against terrorism in recent years and was a party to the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism. It was also a party to nine international legal instruments on counter-terrorism.

74. Malaysia favoured moderation as a means of negating the propagation of extremism and radicalization. It was ready to share its experience in using that approach with other nations in the hope that it would be embraced globally. His delegation supported efforts to counter terrorist narratives, in accordance with international law and the guidelines set out in Security Council resolution 2354 (2017). The

Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, based in Malaysia, had established a digital strategic communications division which was pursuing a soft approach to countering such online narratives. His Government stood ready to cooperate with any interested Member States in capacity-building programmes and joint research projects on the issue of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization and remained fully committed to the efforts of the United Nations, including the recently established Office of Counter-Terrorism, to prevent and eliminate all forms and manifestations of international terrorism.

75. **Ms. Al-Dah** (United Arab Emirates) said that the propagation of the transnational scourge of terrorism and violent extremism, especially in her part of the world, had exacerbated the security situation and contributed to humanitarian crises, taking millions of lives and causing untold damage to infrastructure and economies. To eradicate it, Member States must unite around the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which required them to share their experiences and best practices and to enter into international partnerships. Her own country continued to participate effectively in a number of regional and international coalitions against terrorism, including the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. It had updated its laws in the light of the relevant international conventions to make terrorist practices and the financing of terrorism criminal offences. The aim was to establish an appropriate legal framework to combat terrorism and bring perpetrators to justice.

76. The United Arab Emirates was a party to more than 15 international and regional counter-terrorism instruments and was actively engaged with its partners in efforts to prevent the financing of terrorism, which was a precondition for its complete elimination. No entity could be allowed to give support or shelter to terrorist groups. Her delegation called on all Member States to abide by their commitments under international law. It was also important to strengthen cooperation among countries, cultures and religions to address the causes of extremism. Her country adhered to the principle of prevention: it had set up a ministry of tolerance and a council of Islamic sages and had instituted a special prize for tolerance. Her Government was also fully involved in the fight against cyberterrorism and had hosted a conference on the subject in 2007, resulting in the Abu Dhabi Declaration, which included a number of recommendations on ways to combat that scourge while highlighting the need to combat the ideas propagated by extremists.

Her delegation welcomed the measures taken by the United Nations Secretary-General to reform the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and continued to call for the adoption by consensus of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

77. **Ms. Samarasinghe** (Sri Lanka) said that, as a country that had suffered under the yoke of terrorism for 30 years, Sri Lanka strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed; they were an attack on everyone; everyone should therefore show solidarity and unity of purpose in combating the scourge. Her delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and pledged to cooperate with it in its key functions, particularly in regard to assistance for capacity-building in Member States. In 2009, 2016 and 2017 respectively, Sri Lanka had hosted three regional workshops for judges, prosecutors and police officers of South Asian Member States on effectively countering terrorism.

78. While progress had been made in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy since 2006, many challenges had arisen as a result of the changing face of terrorism and violent extremism, including through the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, financing of terrorism, the rapid advancement of technology, porous borders and large movements of persons fleeing violence. International networks with linkages to organized crime were a lifeline for terrorist groups, making it imperative for Member States to pool their resources and share intelligence in that regard.

79. Due consideration should be given to the fourth pillar of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy, namely ensuring that human rights and the rule of law were observed, in global efforts to counter terrorism. Moreover, terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism should not be associated with any region, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

80. Her delegation recognized the value of the steps already taken to develop a normative framework for enhanced international cooperation in combating terrorism, particularly as reflected in the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and appreciated the efforts made during the intersessional period to move on towards a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

It was regrettable, however, that it had not proved possible to muster the political will needed to break the current impasse surrounding that draft instrument. Sri Lanka urged Member States to resolve outstanding differences without delay so as to send a clear message on the resolve of the international community to combat that phenomenon, for the sake of all victims of terrorism and for the future of the world. The need to do so had never been more urgent.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1)

1. **Mr. Al-Thari** (Saudi Arabia), speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, said that terrorism constituted a flagrant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and contradicted the principles and practices of Islam; it should not be associated with any religion, race, faith, theology, values, culture, society or group. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation took note of recent statements of world leaders who dissociated Islam from terrorist organizations; it strongly condemned any attempt to link Islam with terrorism and reiterated the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations, for the good of peace and harmony in the world. It therefore welcomed international and regional initiatives and efforts to that end.

2. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. It was essential to follow a comprehensive approach by addressing the root causes of terrorism, including the unlawful use of force, aggression, foreign occupation, repression, festering international disputes and political marginalization and alienation. It was important to combat all terrorist groups and organizations, wherever they existed, without any distinction.

3. States should enhance their cooperation and coordination with the aim of prosecuting the perpetrators of terrorist acts; preventing the provision of funds, safe havens, assistance or weapons to terrorist groups and organizations; and refuting the narratives and ideologies of terrorist groups and organizations. It was also important to distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, a distinction which was anchored in international law, international humanitarian law, Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 46/51.

4. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was a living document that should be updated and re-examined regularly and implemented in a balanced manner. States should cooperate to ban the payment of ransoms to terrorists. It was important to increase the resources of United Nations entities and departments entrusted with capacity-building in Member States to assist them in fulfilling their obligations under United Nations resolutions. It was also important to enhance bilateral technical assistance and technology transfer to that end.

5. Every effort should be made to reach a consensus agreement on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism by resolving the outstanding issues, including the legal definition of terrorism, in particular the distinction between terrorism and the struggle for the right to self-determination by peoples under foreign occupation or colonial or alien domination and the scope of the acts covered by that instrument.

6. A high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations should be convened to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to arrive at an agreed definition of terrorism.

7. **Ms. Cerrato** (Honduras) said that international terrorism, which pursued destabilization of the world, had become a ferocious monster. Honduras condemned any and all forms of terrorism as being manifestations of human cruelty for which there could be no political, ideological, religious or cultural justification. Honduras was committed to the maintenance of international peace and security and aligned itself with all actions and agreements that strengthened the interrelations and obligations among nations with a view to promoting a culture of peace.

8. As a party to international instruments against terrorism such as the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, Honduras reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism, with full respect for national and international law, human rights and international humanitarian law. It welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/291, on strengthening the capability of the United Nations system to assist Member States in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, through which the Office of Counter-Terrorism had been established.

9. **Mr. Saikal** (Afghanistan) said that terrorism was not only an attack on human life and basic freedoms, but an attack on the compact of citizenship — on the relationship of the nation-State with its people, which made democratic societies unique, fair and free.

10. Afghanistan remained a front-line State in the world's fight against international terrorism. Its struggle against that global menace was ingrained in its social fabric, and it was making steady progress in combating the evil of terrorism, which was alien to

Afghan values, customs and traditions. Afghan security forces were battling terrorist groups from abroad that were intent on keeping the country unstable. In different parts of the country, major losses had been inflicted in the ranks of terrorists and violent extremist groups — the Taliban, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Qaida and other such entities.

11. Having suffered setbacks, those groups had now shifted their tactics. It was indicative of their absolute moral bankruptcy that they were now focusing their barbaric attacks on ordinary Afghans, public figures and international security and civilian personnel working to promote stability and prosperity in the country. Outside the battlefield, his country was working closely with others in the region — bilaterally, trilaterally and through other mechanisms — to tackle the threat of terrorism and other transnational criminal activities plaguing Afghanistan and the region.

12. Reversing the tide of terrorism warranted more effective action by the United Nations. The establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism was an important development. It was to be hoped that the new Office would function in a manner that would have a positive impact on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Renewed focus must be given to the implementation of the Security Council resolutions dealing with terrorism, which provided a strong basis for suppressing the capacity, resources and other enablers that empowered terrorists to continue their vicious campaign. All States must condemn all terrorist elements without any distinction and prevent any form of support to terrorists, including safe havens and moral, material and financial aid. Afghanistan joined other countries in expressing its concern over the impasse in finalizing the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. All outstanding issues should be resolved in the interests of strengthening the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture.

13. **Mr. Sadykov** (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and affirmed that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, culture, civilization or ethnic group. Terrorism respected no borders; his delegation wished to pay its respects to the victims of terrorism in countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom. Kazakhstan, too, had fallen victim to terrorist attacks orchestrated by a variety of groups in the recent past.

14. His country welcomed the recent reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture with the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism; Kazakhstan looked forward to working closely with the Office.

15. More than 20 years of debates had still not led to the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism; however, many achievements had emerged from the process so far. Despite their differences, Member States had come a long way in charting the course towards effectively fulfilling their collective responsibilities. Their discussions had yielded three separate instruments that aimed to tackle terrorism: the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted in 1997; the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted in 1999, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted in 2005. They joined the 19 international counter-terrorism conventions already in force, of which Kazakhstan had ratified 15.

16. Another notable achievement and manifestation of a global consensus had been the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006. While the primary responsibility to implement the Strategy remained with individual Member States, a regional and global approach had proven beneficial. In 2011, Central Asia had been the first region where a comprehensive and integrated joint plan of action for the implementation of the Global Strategy had been adopted. In 2017, Kazakhstan had contributed $300,000 for the implementation of the joint plan of action, under which Central Asian countries had collaborated on such issues as countering the financing of terrorism, enhancing border security, fostering dialogue with religious institutions and leaders and highlighting the role of the media in addressing terrorism and violent extremism. Kazakhstan was gravely concerned about the emergence of radical terrorist groups in Afghanistan, along its borders with the countries of Central Asia.

17. Working towards the elimination of terrorism also required coordinated actions aimed at eradicating the causes that gave rise to terrorism through measures to prevent the radicalization of youth, such as facilitating employment and access to education, skills development and inter-ethnic and interreligious dialogue, all measures in which Kazakhstan was currently engaged.

18. His country stood for the widest implementation of multilateral instruments and mechanisms to stop the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, shut down channels for the financial support of terrorist activities through illegal trade in drugs, natural resources and

cultural artefacts, and counter the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Such endeavours would require strong regional cooperation and the political will for countries to fulfil all their obligations. No country alone could be effective in its counter-terrorism measures if it did not benefit from the collaboration of others.

19. With that in mind, Kazakhstan intended to start a process of consultation for the preparation of a code of conduct for the achievement of a terrorism-free world. The process of consultation would determine the principles to be included in the code of conduct, charting collective responsibilities and contributions towards defeating and preventing international terrorism. The code of conduct would focus on what countries had in common, as opposed to what divided them, and on their collective responsibility towards compliance with the international instruments they had agreed to. It would forge a global partnership for the prevention of terrorism based on the principles of good will and understanding of common interests.

20. **Ms. Guadey** (Ethiopia) said that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provided a global framework for enhancing national, regional and international counter-terrorism efforts. While the primary responsibility for implementing the Strategy rested with Member States, international, regional and subregional organizations must continue to play a key role in promoting cooperation on fighting terrorism. Her delegation welcomed the recent establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of the Under-Secretary-General, and she expressed the hope that the Office would increase the synergy among United Nations entities working on counter-terrorism. The Security Council counter-terrorism architecture established by resolution 1373 (2001) was another important framework for combating terrorism and violent extremism.

21. Despite the significant progress made in those and other global frameworks, international cooperation to address the threat of terrorism remained ineffective, and double standards persisted. The fact that terrorism was a complex and ever-changing phenomenon called for sophisticated mechanisms geared to addressing new and emerging challenges. Ethiopia was in a volatile neighbourhood that was facing threats of terrorism and violent extremism; it considered effective international and regional cooperation on countering such threats to be a matter of absolute necessity. She applauded the important role that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Centre of Excellence in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism had started to play in promoting the regional sharing of good practices and lessons learned and in bringing together stakeholders in the region. Ensuring continued support to that subregional centre was critically important.

22. Ethiopia had ratified nine of the international counter-terrorism agreements and the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and had taken a number of legal and administrative measures to implement them. Despite the many strides made, a great deal remained to be done, and Ethiopia would continue to work with Member States and United Nations and other stakeholders in countering the menace of terrorism.

23. In conclusion, her delegation reiterated its support for the convening of an international summit under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including identifying its root causes, and called on Member States to show flexibility in resolving outstanding issues so that the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism could be finalized.

24. **Ms. Flores Herrera** (Panama) said that her country's ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and of 19 other regional and international instruments was a reliable indicator of the priority it accorded to combating international terrorism. Complying with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), Panama had included a section on terrorism in its Criminal Code which characterized as crimes against collective security any disturbance of the peace or instigation of panic or terror and any provision of monetary or material resources or other financing for the commission of terrorism.

25. Since Panama was a transit State with a financial system of some importance in the region, that system could be used for both lawful and unlawful purposes. One way of suppressing terrorism was to cut off its sources of financing, strengthen financial institutions and adopt legislation in accordance with international standards of due diligence. Her country was working on legislative reforms towards that end. For example, on 27 April 2015, the National Assembly had adopted legislation providing for regulatory and administrative measures to prevent money-laundering, the financing of terrorism and financial support for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

26. Panama was the only country in Latin America to form part of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL led by the United States of America; its efforts were focused exclusively on preventing terrorist groups from using the Panamanian banking system for their financing. While heading the Inter-American Committee against

Terrorism (CICTE), it had hosted the first conference on the financing of terrorism and cybersecurity.

27. In addition to focusing on cutting off the financing of terrorist groups, Panama firmly supported the exchange of information and continuing education in the southern hemisphere. It had the largest biometric database in the region, and it had prevented persons with links to terrorism, members of international criminal networks, drug traffickers and persons trafficking in human beings from passing through the country.

28. No one could remain neutral in the face of terrorism and the murder of innocent civilians.

29. **Mr. Mikeladze** (Georgia) said that the globalization of commerce, greater freedom of travel and improved information transfer technologies opened up new vistas of opportunities for terrorists. Any form of direct or indirect support of terrorism by any State or non-State actors should be condemned, and States should adhere to all United Nations anti-terrorism conventions and relevant international instruments.

30. As ISIL was currently experiencing significant loss of territories both in Iraq and in the Syrian Arab Republic, there was an increasing threat that it would shift combat strategy and direct its main resources towards other countries. Robust efforts were needed to counter that threat by introducing measures that were both effective and in full compliance with the principles of international instruments on human rights, humanitarian law and refugee law. Stronger support for the rule of law was a fundamental component of the fight against terrorism, the strengthening of international cooperation and the intensive and timely sharing of information were of paramount importance.

31. In Georgia, significant attention was being given to the prevention of radicalization. The Government was making considerable efforts to facilitate the reintegration of vulnerable members of local communities into society. Notably, no travels of Georgian citizens to the Middle East to join ISIS or of foreign terrorist fighters from the Middle East to Georgia had been detected recently.

32. In December 2016, Georgia had voluntarily allocated financial support for humanitarian activities in the Syrian Arab Republic aimed at improving the situation on the ground. In addition, Georgia had accepted hundreds of asylum seekers from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq who were fleeing the violence and brutality of ISIS.

33. Ensuring accountability for such heinous crimes was critically important. Georgia had been a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 71/248, aimed at the establishment of an international, impartial and independent mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. In February 2017, Georgia had made financial contributions to support the establishment of the mechanism.

34. Capacity-building in all States and a coordinated international approach were vital elements of the global counter-terrorism effort. All Member States should increase their contributions to the relevant United Nations cooperation and technical assistance projects.

35. In conclusion, he reiterated his country's strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

36. **Mr. Khiari** (Tunisia) said that terrorism was a flagrant violation of the rule of law and the principles enshrined in humanitarian law, human rights law and all relevant international instruments. Since the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, a breakthrough had been achieved in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The recent reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and the adoption of various resolutions tackling that issue testified to the commitment of Member States to step up efforts to address effectively the relevant threats to international peace and security. Tunisia welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and stood ready to work closely with the new Office for the purpose of delivering a comprehensive, balanced and strategic answer to the unprecedented threat of terrorism, in accordance with the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

37. Like many other countries, Tunisia had faced the scourge of terrorism and believed it was imperative that terrorists should know that the international community stood absolutely firm in its resolve to combat terrorism, thanks to ample international and regional cooperation and solidarity. Tunisia had acceded to different international legal instruments linked to the terrorist threat and to the elimination of the financing of terrorist groups and had ratified regional conventions related to the fight against terrorism. In 2015, his country had adopted a law on the fight against terrorism and the repression of money-laundering, criminalizing all acts of support for, incitement to, training for, recruitment for and justification of terrorism and all complicity in the

financing of terrorist activities. In November 2016, Tunisia had adopted a comprehensive national strategy on extremism and terrorism, which covered prevention, protection, prosecution and response.

38. His delegation stressed the importance of adopting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Tunisia called on all Member States to fully engage in resolving the outstanding issues, namely the legal definition and the scope of terrorism. Holding a high-level conference under United Nations auspices to formulate the joint, organized response of the international community to terrorism would be an important step towards reaching consensus on the unresolved issues related to the draft convention.

39. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that his country unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It welcomed the Secretary-General's engagement in a successful review of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and expressed the hope that it would work closely with the regional groups and the entire United Nations family.

40. Namibia would work with other delegations to refine the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to achieve consensus regarding a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. There was a need for increased cooperation between the regional organizations and the United Nations on that matter. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should be given priority attention.

41. Terrorism should not automatically be linked to any particular religion; nor should the genuine struggle for independence by people whose territories were under occupation be equated to terrorism. Nevertheless, Namibia was concerned over the possible danger of the use of or search for asylum as a pretext to commit terrorist acts in other countries. Member States needed to put in place vigorous and regular screening mechanisms to ensure that those who had committed terrorist acts did not enjoy refugee status. Countries should have the capacity to prosecute their nationals when they were accused of carrying out terrorist acts, irrespective of where the crime was committed. Member States should also cooperate in finding and sharing evidence on terrorist acts. National laws should limit the chances for funding terrorists. Moreover, international cooperation between law enforcement and judicial agencies was a necessity.

42. The Government of Namibia had undertaken numerous measures to enhance the capacity of relevant institutions to address the scourge of terrorism. It had participated in the development of regional processes to facilitate the exchange of intelligence among States. In 2014, in compliance with the relevant United Nations conventions and Security Council resolutions, the Government had passed a law on the prevention and combating of terrorist and proliferation activities and had adopted the relevant implementing regulations. Together with other members of the Southern African Development Community, Namibia was implementing a strategy on countering terrorism in the region and a protocol on extradition and mutual legal assistance.

43. **Ms. Pierce** (United States of America) said that all terrorist acts, by whomever committed, were criminal, inhumane and unjustifiable, regardless of motivation. Her delegation reiterated its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and its commitment to the fight to end it. Joint international efforts were needed to prevent such heinous acts and, in that regard, the United Nations had a critical role to play in mobilizing the international community, building capacity and facilitating technical assistance to Member States in implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions.

44. A number of Security Council resolutions adopted over the past year underscored the counter-terrorism role of all elements of government, including ministries of finance, justice, the interior and security. The resolutions covered subjects such as preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons, countering terrorist narratives, protecting cultural heritage in armed conflict, protecting critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks, preventing human trafficking in areas affected by armed conflict and strengthening international judicial cooperation on counter-terrorism.

45. Results were being achieved. The flow of foreign terrorist fighters had declined substantially over the last year. Her Government had information-sharing arrangements with almost 70 international partners to help identify, track and deter known and suspected terrorists, and some 26 partners shared financial information that could provide actionable leads to intercept or prosecute foreign terrorist fighters. At least 31 countries used enhanced traveller screening measures, approximately 60 countries had enacted legislation to prosecute and punish activities relating to foreign terrorist fighters, and at least 65 countries had prosecuted or arrested such fighters or those facilitating their activities. All Member States could learn from each other's experiences, but much more needed to be done to fully implement Security Council resolution 2178 (2014).

46. Her delegation firmly supported the efforts of the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum and other multilateral bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations aimed at developing practical tools to further the United Nations counter-terrorism framework. Continued coordination was needed among the various United Nations entities and external partners such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum and its related initiatives and platforms, which advanced the practical implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through training, capacity-building and grant-making efforts for community-based projects to prevent and counter violent extremism.

47. The United States welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which must pursue an approach to implementing the Global Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism in which the importance of respecting human rights and the rule of law was recognized.

48. Domestically, the United States was continuing to raise community awareness of violent extremism, radicalization and recruitment dynamics and to provide community leaders with tools and resources to work on prevention efforts. One new area of work was state and local intervention services for individuals headed down a path toward violent extremism or radicalization before a crime was committed.

49. All Member States should provide the United Nations system actors and other relevant actors with sufficient resources to deliver required technical assistance and generate more effective solutions. In that regard, her Government continued to make voluntary contributions to the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute for the development of research, assistance and training. It encouraged other Member States to join it in helping to provide technical and capacity-building assistance across a range of issues addressed by the Global Strategy, including preventing and countering violent extremism, and implementing relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2178 (2014). A growing pool of donors to the United Nations and INTERPOL could also help coordinate the international community's civilian counter-terrorism assistance based on shared priorities. In addition, Member States should partner with local communities and key civil society organizations, which were often among the most effective in countering terrorist lies.

50. While the international community had made significant progress in developing a robust legal counter-terrorism regime, much remained to be done. The existing international counter-terrorism instruments would be effective only if they were widely ratified and implemented. She drew particular attention to the six instruments concluded since 2005 on such issues as the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, the physical protection of nuclear material and the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of maritime navigation, unlawful acts relating to international civil aviation and unlawful seizure of aircraft.

51. Her delegation remained willing to work with other States to build on and enhance the international counter-terrorism framework and would listen carefully to the statements of other delegations concerning the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The United Nations must send united and unambiguous signals with regard to terrorism.

52. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia) said that Zambia unreservedly condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all their forms and manifestations, irrespective of the motivation, and regardless of where they occurred or by whom they were perpetrated. It would continue to fulfil its obligations under international law by supporting all counter-terrorism measures adopted by relevant regional groups, mechanisms and the international community that were consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and soon, it was to be hoped, with a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

53. Since 2015, when the country's anti-terrorism legislation had been amended, the Government had issued regulations to implement Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001) and their successors. The first national money-laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment report had been issued in September 2017; it showed that the money-laundering risk in Zambia was medium to high while the terrorist financing risk was medium to low. An action plan had since been developed to assist both the Government and the private sector to prioritize their combined efforts to mitigate money-laundering and terrorist financing risks.

54. There was a need for the international community to combine efforts to deal decisively with the scourge of terrorism and to provide technical support to developing countries to enhance and strengthen their institutions dealing with terrorism.

55. There were not more than five regional groups in the United Nations, yet in combination they could eliminate terrorism in all its forms; together they could give rise to peace, security, stability and sustainable development throughout the world.

56. **Mr. Waweru** (Kenya) said that Kenya had suffered and was still suffering from the scourge of terrorism. It expressed solidarity with Member States that had been subjected to terrorism in the recent past, including Mali, Libya, the United Kingdom, France, Afghanistan and Iraq. Kenya condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It welcomed the Secretary-General's successful review of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. With that boost to the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, much-needed coherence and improved coordination would be realized.

57. No single nation could win the war against terrorism alone. That was why Kenya had ratified and domesticated all the international conventions against transnational organized crime, including the protocols on terrorism and associated crimes such as money-laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking and corruption. However, with the emergence and expansion of transnational crime, including terrorism, all justice systems were confronted with new challenges. Criminal offenders, including terrorists, were mobile and often sought to evade detection, arrest and punishment by operating across international borders and by playing on the reluctance of law enforcement authorities to engage in complicated and expensive transnational investigations and prosecutions.

58. Kenya supported international judicial and law enforcement cooperation, mutual legal assistance, extradition, the transfer of prisoners and the transfer of proceedings in terrorism and other criminal matters. It had forged important bilateral partnerships against terrorism, particularly for building its counter-terrorism capacities. Regionally, Kenya had strong law enforcement and judicial cooperation partnerships within the East African Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

59. Kenya remained a front-line State against terrorism in Africa. Since 2012, it had contributed significant numbers of troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Kenya called on the international community to continue supporting the work of AMISOM through adequate and predictable financing, because even though Somalia was relatively stable, the war against Al-Shabaab terrorism was yet to be concluded.

60. In September 2016, Kenya had launched its national strategy to counter violent extremism, and it had incorporated into domestic law the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. A revamped national counter-terrorism centre that coordinated efforts against radicalization and extremism had already recorded much success.

61. To sustainably respond to the problem of violent extremism and terrorism, it was important to have comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies that empowered civil society organizations, including religious leaders and women, as well as vulnerable groups, and that covered not only security and law enforcement but also poverty eradication, job creation and development. In an effort to remove the conditions conducive to the radicalization and extremism that led to terrorism, Kenya had devoted resources to new local administrative units in an effort to address historic claims of marginalization and to help create opportunities for local youth. It had established prison-based programmes to rehabilitate radicalized youth and reintegrate them into society. Terrorists were increasingly appropriating cyberspace to advance their evil schemes. The use of the Internet by terrorists must be stopped.

62. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that recent acts of terrorism — from the bombings in a crowded London subway station to the terrifying attacks in Burkina Faso and the coordinated actions that had taken the lives of United Nations peacekeeping soldiers in Mali — should have no place in the civilized world. His Government strongly condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever committed. In particular, the Maldives condemned all acts of terrorism committed in the name of Islam. Terrorism had no place in Islam, and no terrorist activity could be attributed to that great religion.

63. Efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism must begin with, and be guided by, a clear and resolute policy. In 2016, his country had formulated a comprehensive national policy against terrorism and violent extremism. The Maldives had enacted an anti-terrorism law in 2015 which helped law enforcement agencies and the prosecuting authorities to deal with foreign terrorist fighters and those providing financial or material support to terrorist or violent extremist organizations. It had conducted a baseline study on factors contributing to

radicalization in the Maldives. In 2016, the Government had established a national counter-terrorism centre to provide a common platform to facilitate information- and intelligence-sharing and synchronize inter-agency activities aimed at combating terrorism and violent extremism. In October 2016, it had hosted an international seminar on counter-terrorism and violent extremism so as to establish an international network to facilitate further collaboration.

64. The most feasible strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism was through programmes to enable communities to resist the ideologies of radicalization. Communities, especially women and young people, needed to be empowered. Young people were the most vulnerable to radicalization, but they were also the best hope for positive change in societies.

65. His Government believed that its counter-terrorism strategy had to be part of a global, comprehensive approach. It commended the establishment of the new Office of Counter-Terrorism.

66. **Mr. Musikhin** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation welcomed the establishment, by General Assembly resolution 71/291, of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and was prepared to assist that Office. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy must be implemented in a balanced manner, with equal attention to each of its four pillars, and with a view to halting terrorist threats on the basis of appropriate analysis of their evolution. In that analysis, the following aspects should be taken into account.

67. Firstly, international terrorism was continuing to link up with transnational organized crime; its financial foundation was being shored up through petroleum profits and illicit trade in narcotics, cultural artefacts and natural resources. The type of terrorist acts now being committed required very little preparation, aside from massive indoctrination. Hence the need for preventing the expansion of terrorist ideologies that led to radicalization. Terrorists were still using the Internet successfully to disseminate their ideas, recruit new fighters and prepare acts of terrorism. Now as never before, coordinated efforts to identify and remove terrorist content from the Internet were urgently needed. At the same time, the ideals of tolerance and understanding among ethnic groups and religious faiths should be advanced. Clerics should be involved in that effort, as should the media, which must be expected to voluntarily limit the dissemination of information that might benefit terrorism.

68. Secondly, there was the problem of the return of foreign terrorist fighters from conflict areas with military experience and links that would enable them to carry out subversive activities in their home countries. The Russian Federation had long been proposing a range of measures to combat the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, including a system-wide approach with enhanced cooperation between special services and financial intelligence units and improved mechanisms for legal cooperation on the problem. There was also a need for greater exchange of information, stronger border controls and the tracking of the fighters' movements.

69. His country consistently supported United Nations efforts to strengthen the counter-terrorism potential of the countries concerned. Against the background of the growing threat of terrorism in Central Asia, the Office of Counter-Terrorism would be justified in paying greater attention to ensuring counter-terrorism protection for States in that region. A great deal of useful experience had been gained in that regard through the work of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. With active Russian participation, those regional bodies had consistently taken measures to improve the legal basis of the fight against terrorism and to harmonize legislation.

70. The continued terrorist acts in various parts of the globe proved that efforts to create individual islands of security, free from terrorism, could not yield the desired results. Preventing the terrorist threat from spreading would be possible only on a truly collective basis, without double standards. He called on all Member States to show zero tolerance towards terrorism, in accordance with the Global Strategy.

71. Referring to the statement made the day before by Ukraine, he said that that delegation was once again trying to distract attention from the real problems of terrorism. Having unleashed large-scale military actions in 2014 against the population of the eastern regions of the country, the authorities in Kiev were again seeking justification for their actions under the guise of counter-terrorism. That was unacceptable. The delegation had also distorted the content of the order issued by the International Court of Justice in April 2017; in reality, the Court had rejected all the provisional measures requested by Kiev under the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

72. **Mr. Djani** (Indonesia) said that every country, regardless of its beliefs or the nature of its economy, whether developed or developing, faced the same threat from terrorism, a menace that respected no borders, races or colours. Terrorists were evolving in

their methods, organization and networks. No single country could deal with terrorism on its own. Capacity-building in respect of legal frameworks, human and institutional resources and early warning was essential to enable States to cope with the threat of terrorism in all its manifestations.

72. The message that terrorism was not linked to a particular religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group must be stated clearly and reflected in media reporting. A balance of hard and soft approaches was needed as part of a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. Under a hard approach, legal frameworks and law enforcement would be strengthened. In the soft approach, countries would continue to work through cultural, community and religious organizations. De-radicalization and counter-radicalization programmes must be used to rehabilitate convicted terrorists and reintegrate them into society. Through such programmes, former terrorists could become involved in efforts to combat radicalism and extremism in the families of terrorists, thereby breaking the cycle of intergenerational terrorism, increasing counter-narratives in social media and enhancing the role of women and the family in countering violent extremism. Terrorist financing must be eliminated by thwarting the ability of financial systems to be conducive to terrorism. Creative use must be made of new technology in fighting terrorists, who had themselves been creative in exploiting the weaknesses of information technology and social media by means of cyberattacks.

74. Extremism and radicalism from conflict areas to other regions were being spread through the use of foreign terrorist fighters and individual terrorist acts by the so-called "lone wolf". Indonesia had taken several steps to tackle the problem: banning ISIL; discouraging and preventing people from joining ISIL; monitoring and closing websites related to ISIL; and countering radical narratives on the Internet. Indonesia was also in the process of finalizing an amendment to its counter-terrorism law to address the subject of foreign terrorist fighters.

75. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy must be implemented in a balanced manner; such implementation, strengthened by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, would enable more action-oriented activities to be undertaken in a coordinated and coherent manner.

76. Global partnerships were needed for concrete action to be taken to address issues such as foreign terrorist fighters, cross-border terrorist financing, global terrorist networking and cyberspace. The idea of convening a high-level meeting on the global response to terrorism and countering violent extremism should be further explored.

77. **Mr. Şen** (Turkey) said that Turkey strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and paid its respects to the memories of the victims of terrorism. It continued to combat terrorist organizations, notably the Fethullah terrorist organization, ISIL, Al-Qaida, the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and some left-wing terrorist organizations. The instability and ongoing conflicts in the region were a pressing challenge for national security.

78. Turkey had been at the forefront of the fight against ISIL from the very beginning. Its no-entry list included 53,781 individuals, and it had deported 5,217 persons in the context of measures against foreign terrorist fighters. Risk analysis units at Turkish airports had denied entry to more than 4,000 suspected foreign terrorist fighters.

79. Horrendous PKK attacks had claimed the lives of 371 civilians and 1,003 law enforcement and security personnel in Turkey over the past two years. Groups affiliated with the PKK were active in Syria, Iraq and Europe. Counter-measures against PKK activities were particularly important with a view to hindering financing, recruitment and propaganda activities. Turkey expected its allies to maintain their vigilance against the PKK and its affiliated entities.

80. The international community must act with equal determination against all terrorist organizations; a selective approach was unacceptable. A terrorist organization could not be legitimized on the pretext that it was fighting another terrorist organization. Terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group.

81. It was also imperative that all States take the necessary measures to bring members of terrorist organizations to justice. The effective implementation of the universal principle of "extradite or prosecute" was crucial to a collective response to terrorism. It was regrettable that members of terrorist organizations, including those targeting Turkey, were allowed to abuse the right to asylum in order to circumvent justice. Since organized crime was a primary source of terrorist financing, sustained efforts should be made to prevent crimes such as drug trafficking, money-laundering and arms smuggling.

82. Over the years, Turkey had concluded bilateral agreements that provided the legal basis for cooperation against terrorism with more than 70

countries. Turkey also contributed to the counter-terrorism capacity-building programmes of several countries around the world. It was a party to most of the United Nations conventions and protocols on terrorism. It attached great importance to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy across all of its four pillars and welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

83. **Ms. Myint** (Myanmar) said that terrorism had inflicted untold suffering and loss of life throughout the world and had become even more formidable with the recent rise of violent extremism. International terrorists and violent extremists aimed to create a climate of fear, inflict maximum damage and suffering, tear apart communities and destroy the fabric of societies.

84. Myanmar stood with the rest of the world in condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It was collaborating with countries around the globe, particularly those in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in efforts to counter terrorism. It had ratified 11 of the 16 United Nations conventions related to counter-terrorism. Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism legislation had been enacted in March and June 2014. A financial investigation unit and a counter-terrorism department had been set up under the Myanmar police force.

85. Myanmar was not immune to acts of terrorism, as the violent and coordinated attacks in northern Rakhine state in October and November 2016 and August 2017 vividly demonstrated. The attacks had been claimed by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA). According to confessions by the arrested suspects, people and organizations from abroad were providing them with financial aid. The Government of Myanmar had declared ARSA and its supporters to be a terrorist group under its counter-terrorism law of 2014.

86. That group had been targeting not only security forces but also innocent civilians. A mass grave of 45 Hindu villagers, including women and children who had been brutally killed, had recently been discovered in the northern state of Rakhine. About 93 Hindu villagers had been reported missing since the attacks of August 2017, which had provoked widespread fear and the displacement of communities, not just Muslim and Rakhine, but also small minority groups. The Government of Myanmar strongly condemned those terrorist acts, would do all in its power to prevent them from occurring again and would strive to bring the perpetrators to justice.

87. The world must stand together to remove the scourge of terrorism.

88. **Ms. Khaled** (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General to head it. Enhancing coordination and coherence in the United Nations system-wide response to terrorism and violent extremism was important, not least in addressing the misalignment of priorities and reporting that were often witnessed at the country level. Bangladesh welcomed Security Council resolutions 2322 (2016), which addressed the nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime, and 2379 (2017), which ensured accountability for international terrorist groups. As a State party to most of the counter-terrorism treaties, Bangladesh underscored the need to advance the development of a comprehensive convention on terrorism.

89. A terrorist was a terrorist and did not deserve to be identified by any belief, caste or creed. Her Government continued to make significant strides in its response to terrorism at the policy, legal and institutional levels, in line with the Prime Minister's "zero tolerance" approach. In the aftermath of the tragic terrorist attack at a local restaurant in 2016, the law enforcement authorities had already identified a considerable number of masterminds, financiers and foot soldiers and had dealt with them within the purview of the law. Efforts were ongoing to unearth the location of the remaining operatives and bring them to justice.

90. Bangladesh unequivocally condemned the attacks carried out against the Myanmar border security forces by an extremist group on 25 August 2017 and had offered cooperation in the form of coordinated patrols and joint operations. Regrettably, however, the counter-offensive by Myanmar security forces had been disproportionate and indiscriminate, resulting in an unprecedented exodus of civilians across the borders into Bangladesh. While offering shelter to those distressed people, Bangladesh remained concerned over the possibility of terrorist and violent extremist elements trying to take advantage of their acute vulnerability. The international community must support Myanmar in finding a lasting solution to the protracted humanitarian crisis, not least in the interests of regional peace and stability.

91. Her Government called for a whole-of-society response to root out the evils of violent extremism conducive to terrorism. It was focusing on building community resilience and engagement, including through enhanced participation in community policing

and women- and youth-led initiatives and through public-private partnerships and collaboration with relevant United Nations and other entities.

92. To conclude, she reiterated the three overriding priorities for the international community: first, stop supplying arms to the terrorists; second, stop terrorist financing; and third, settle all international disputes peacefully.

93. *Mr. Horna (Peru), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

94. **Ms. Al-Juboori** (Iraq) said that her delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, an institution that was intended to bolster the coordination of United Nations mechanisms in combating terrorism. Her Government firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and, from whatever origin or region. Terrorist acts constituted a direct threat to international peace and security. Iraq was taking steps to eradicate that terrible scourge, a phenomenon that could not be associated with any religion, community, ethnic group, faith, society, culture or civilization.

95. When ISIL had launched its offensive against the Government and citizens of Iraq, leading to the occupation of major cities from 2014 onwards, barbaric terrorist acts had been carried out against Iraqi citizens. Since then, a number of steps had been taken in Iraq and throughout the world to abolish that scourge once and for all and prevent its spread to other States. The unity and cohesion of the Iraqi people had enabled a fatal blow to be dealt to that terrorist group, in particular thanks to the assistance provided by the international coalition. The successes over the past three years in most Iraqi cities and towns, notably in Mosul, were a clear example of that.

96. Her delegation attached special importance to international efforts and initiatives in countering terrorism. It was important to draw attention to the unfailing efforts of the Security Council since ISIL had emerged, including through resolutions 2170 (2014), 2253 (2015) and 2379 (2017), which condemned ISIL and took note of the efforts of the Iraqi Government to eradicate the group. The Sixth Committee should study everything that had been done to date and look into the measures adopted, especially with regard to cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the pooling of efforts to eradicate ISIL.

97. Iraq had ratified most of the counter-terrorism instruments and bolstered its legislative arsenal for combating terrorism. It had hosted a number of important international meetings on countering terrorism, including the third international meeting on foreign terrorist fighters, held in October 2015, and the Second International Psychological and Media Operations to Counter Daesh Conference, held in August 2016.

98. Despite efforts by the United Nations in recent decades to combat terrorism and the adoption of many relevant instruments, terrorism was still active throughout the world, including in her country, hence the need to look into the root causes — why the phenomenon persisted, why terrorist acts were being committed — and to review measures taken thus far to combat them. It was also necessary to devise a unified definition of terrorism which would help to combat the phenomenon more effectively. The consensus conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism would help to harmonize counter-terrorism standards and procedures with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

99. **Mr. Mnatsakanyan** (Armenia) said that terrorism continued to pose a significant threat to international peace and stability. Horrific terrorist acts had been perpetrated throughout 2017. There was a collective responsibility to jointly fight and prevent terrorism in all its manifestations, in compliance with international human rights law, humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations.

100. Throughout the past year, United Nations system-wide activities to counter terrorism had been consolidated. The establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism would give further impetus to the fight against terrorism by strengthening coordination and coherence with the main United Nations counter-terrorism entities. The Security Council had been making significant contributions to collective efforts towards countering terrorism. The most recent of the five resolutions adopted in 2017, namely resolution 2379 (2017), represented an important step towards securing accountability and justice in the face of the perpetration by ISIL of acts that could amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

101. Terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization; however, the evidence that extremists and terrorists were targeting specific communities based on their religion or ethnicity had to be acknowledged. The atrocities perpetrated by ISIL, Al-Qaida and associated groups, individuals and entities against ethnic and religious groups were premeditated, identity-based crimes on a massive scale. The suffering of Yazidis, Christians and

other ethnic and religious minorities and groups must not remain unaddressed.

102. Although much had been done in the fight against terrorism, not enough had been achieved to address, at the same time, the conditions that bred the spread of terrorism or to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law. The normative and operational challenges to countering terrorism were compounded by actions aimed at undermining the very foundations and fabrics of societies and national institutions targeted by terrorists. The Secretary-General's holistic prevention agenda and the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism would undoubtedly strengthen the capacities of the United Nations and its impact on preventing the violent extremism which led to terrorism. The media, civil and religious society and educational institutions also played an important role in promoting tolerance, coexistence and an environment in which terrorist narratives and incitement to terrorism were firmly and effectively denied.

103. **Mr. Bagherpour Ardekani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that with the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism his delegation hoped for improvements in the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture that not only enhanced the coordination of counter-terrorism activities across the United Nations system, but also promoted United Nations capacity for better addressing the root causes of terrorism and extremism.

104. The heinous nightmares of terrorism and extremism were not confined to any one part of the world. After over a decade of wholesale failure in combating terrorism since the attacks of 9 September 2001, the ugly realities on the ground demanded that those challenges should be viewed with open eyes and without illusions. Myopic views of a complex situation and the pursuit of short-sighted, self-serving policies were bound to fail. Applying double standards and giving a one-sided interpretation of "terrorism" simply enabled terrorist groups and their affiliates to freely grow, recruit new members and perpetrate unspeakable atrocities.

105. It should have become all too clear by now that a successful fight against the cancerous phenomena of terrorism and extremism called for a multi-pronged strategy based, first and foremost, on a sober understanding and recognition of their enabling conditions, namely, a deeply felt state of deprivation, alienation and marginalization in an affluent and developed environment.

106. Containing and ultimately eliminating extremist terrorist organizations on the ground was certainly required, but only as a first step and only as a component of a much larger effort. Terrorism and extremism, as multidimensional phenomena, could be defeated only if a comprehensive plan was devised and implemented by the various stakeholders in a coordinated and coherent manner. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provided such a common platform for cooperation, and the Islamic Republic of Iran supported its implementation in an integrated and balanced way. States should also increase their efforts to crack down on the recruitment and movement of terrorists, cut off their financing channels and curb their abuse of social media. His country also attached great importance to the capacity of religious actors, including clerics and scholars, to promote mutual understanding and harmonious coexistence among diverse denominations and social groups by denouncing narratives and ideologies that engendered hatred and intolerance.

107. On 7 June 2017, cowardly terrorists affiliated with ISIL had carried out twin terrorist attacks in Tehran. Although the attackers had immediately been fought off by the security forces, several innocent citizens had been killed and dozens injured. Such indiscriminate attacks not only left untouched the will of the Islamic Republic of Iran to fight vigorously all manifestations of terrorism but also rendered that nation more firmly resolved to contribute to the fight against terrorism.

108. To enhance its legislative counter-terrorism capabilities, the Islamic Republic of Iran had concluded several bilateral security cooperation agreements. Furthermore, following the adoption in 2016 of legislation on countering the financing of terrorism, a number of directives and circulars had been issued on effective means of preventing terrorist financing, including through cash couriers and wire transfers. The executive branch of the Government had also started the formal process for accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

109. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that her Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of cause or pretext; there could be no justification for the killing of innocent people anywhere. Terrorism in her country was a by-product of political and geostrategic developments and foreign intervention in the region over the past 40 years. In the past decade alone, Pakistan had lost over 27,000 of its citizens and law enforcement personnel and suffered economic losses of over $120 billion. But neither the human nor financial losses had diminished her country's commitment to fight that menace;

instead, its will to eliminate terrorism had only been reinforced.

110. Her Government had adopted a whole-of-society approach as part of a comprehensive strategy to counter terrorism, including measures to evolve a national narrative to oppose the message of violent extremism. It had created a dedicated counter-terrorism force, enacted laws to prevent the financing of terrorism and undertaken reform of the criminal justice system. It had launched a military campaign, the largest counter-terrorism operation in the world, with the deployment of 200,000 members of its security forces to destroy terrorist infrastructures and bases in the region bordering on Afghanistan and in tribal areas. It had also embarked on a law enforcement operation targeting elements that had fled to urban areas from military operations in the tribal areas. As a result, terrorist activities in Pakistan had been sharply reduced over the past two years to the lowest level since 2006, according to the Global Terrorism Index. Notwithstanding such efforts, terrorism continued to pose a threat, but its nature had now changed: it was primarily supported and financed from outside the country's borders.

111. The United Nations was uniquely positioned to assist Member States in developing their counter-terrorism capacities. Her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's reform initiative and the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. With the reform of the counter-terrorism architecture, however, terrorism must not be dissociated from its political context, its transnational dimension and the geopolitics that often created conditions that spawned terrorism. The upcoming review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy must address the defamation of religions and demonization of communities which incited hatred and violent reactions. Festering disputes and unresolved conflicts, aggression, foreign occupation and denial of the right to self-determination must be addressed as well.

112. Pakistan was in favour of a consensus-based, comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which must be consistent with international humanitarian law and clearly differentiate between acts of terrorism and the legitimate struggle for self-determination of people living under foreign occupation. Malicious attempts to manipulate the international consensus against terrorism to justify the suppression of people struggling for the right of self-determination must never be permitted to succeed.

113. She reiterated he Government's commitment to work together with the international community to counter terrorism, but she also re-emphasized the need to address the root causes and drivers of radicalization that lay in economic and social marginalization and exclusion: otherwise, the world would be fighting only the symptoms and not the underlying causes of the deadly phenomenon of terrorism.

114. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that on 23 May 2017, hundreds of men belonging to an ISIL-inspired terrorist organization had attacked Marawi, a Muslim-majority city in central Mindanao. They had seized control of a considerable part of the city and had taken civilians as hostages. The attack, arguably the most destructive act of terrorism in his country's history, had caused an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, with around 200,000 persons being displaced by the fighting.

115. In just over four months, the conflict had caused 146 deaths among military and police forces, while 673 terrorists had been killed. Civilian casualties numbered 47 dead, most of the fatalities having been sustained in the terrorists' attempts to spark sectarian violence in the expectation their co-religionists would join in the carnage. But the people of Marawi would have nothing to do with the terrorists. There were reports of Muslim residents hiding their Christian neighbours. The Government had demonstrated forbearance, taking care not to unleash greater force so as to minimize civilian casualties, even at the cost of more military and police casualties, in what became a punishing, door-to-door, street-by-street fight. The Government had pushed for the establishment of a peace corridor through the city to allow the safe passage of trapped civilians and enable vital supplies to reach those unable to leave their protected positions within the battle zone. With tens of thousands displaced, the Government had addressed health and sanitation concerns in the evacuation centres, but most of the displaced had quickly found safety and shelter with families and friends — a testament to the strength of the Filipino family system.

116. At the same time, the Philippines had discovered the intimate and symbiotic relationship between terrorism, poverty and the illegal drug trade. Terrorists had been able to gather a motley assortment of extremists, criminals, mercenaries and foreign fighters to take control of Marawi and re-establish in another part of the world their shattered caliphate in the Middle East.

117. The Philippines condemned terrorism anywhere in the world, however inspired — by religious madness or individual perversity, like that in Las Vegas. His country had to agree with the President of the United States of America that terrorism was only for losers.

118. President Duterte understood that terrorism was a global problem that no country could tackle alone. Counter-terrorism was a cornerstone of his national agenda, which included strengthening cooperation with regional partners and with the United States of America, so that the Philippines could have a more effective defence system to crush terrorism when it could not be deterred. The Philippines wished to deepen key areas of cooperation with the United Nations and regional and bilateral partners, including threats to commercial aviation, nuclear terrorism, cybercrime, terrorist financing, support for victims of terrorism and capacity-building.

119. The Philippines addressed violent extremism through a whole-of-society approach. Women, young people, Muslim and Christian leaders and teachers, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector were engaged as partners in counter-radicalization and as a collective force for moderation, peace, democracy and development. The security awareness of local communities was being raised. Law enforcement and security experts were being trained, in partnership with grassroots efforts, to detect and stop threats from home-grown violent extremists.

120. There could be no political accommodation with terrorism. Safety from terrorism could not be bought by yielding to any of its demands. There was no living with terrorism, because it would not let others live.

121. **Mr. AlMowaizri** (Kuwait) said that his country rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism should not be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. Governments must cooperate in the international counter-terrorism effort and aim to establish measures that promoted the rule of law and respect for human rights; address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty; support good governance, sustainable development and coexistence among religions; ensure respect for religious symbols and holy sites; and prevent incitement to hatred, extremism and violence.

122. Kuwait was a party to most of the international counter-terrorism instruments as well as a number of bilateral agreements. His delegation attached great importance to the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The final text should include a clear definition of terrorism, including State terrorism, and should distinguish it from the right of peoples to resist aggression and struggle for self-determination.

123. On 15 March 2017, Kuwait had hosted a meeting of a working group on foreign terrorist fighters, which had brought together 45 States. It reaffirmed its rejection of all forms of terrorism and extremism and advocated strengthening the culture of tolerance and coexistence among peoples. His country fully supported all international efforts to eradicate terrorist threats around the world.

124. **Mr. Lisuchenko** (Ukraine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that what was currently happening in eastern Ukraine was the direct continuation of Russian aggression. On 17 September 2014, by its resolution 71/205, the General Assembly had recognized the temporary occupation of the autonomous republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. But Russia had decided to further destabilize Ukraine by establishing and supporting terrorist organizations in the Donbas region. Russian citizens were at the helm of the terrorist organizations operating there, and were also within their ranks. They were armed with modern Russian weaponry and financed by Russian governmental and non-governmental entities. Clearly, no other pieces of evidence pointing to that country's involvement were needed.

125. In every document provided and statement made in the General Assembly and the Security Council, Ukraine had stressed that terrorist acts were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations, and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. His country also pledged to bring to justice perpetrators and sponsors of those crimes. Yet the Russian Federation acted like an aggressor, apparently believing in its impunity.

126. For over three years, Ukraine had trained the spotlight on the numerous facts revealing Russian support of terrorism in Ukraine. The relevant communications had been included in the submission by Ukraine to the International Court of Justice, and Ukraine was ready to provide additional materials during the waiting phase in the Court's proceedings.

127. He wished to remind the delegation of the Russian Federation that the fact that the International Court of Justice had not authorized provisional measures did not mean that Russia would not be held accountable for violations of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Ukraine would use all peaceful means to protect the nation until the Russian Federation returned Crimea, withdrew from the Donbas and paid in full for its aggression.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1; A/68/37)

1. **Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that terrorism was a matter of grave concern to the international community. Fighting it had become more difficult as terrorist groups now had international connections and were using modern technological, logistical and military means to carry out their activities. Indeed, his country, like many others, had experienced a deadly terrorist attack that had caused many fatalities. The acts of Boko Haram, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other groups in neighbouring countries had caused Côte d'Ivoire to increase preventive measures. It had ratified 16 international counter-terrorism instruments and had also enacted legislation aimed at combating the scourge of terrorism. A 2009 presidential order on combating terrorism financing in the members of the West African Economic and Monetary Union had been complemented by a 2015 law classifying certain acts as acts of terrorism and establishing severe penalties for such acts, while at the same time taking account of the need to ensure full respect for human rights and civil liberties. The law targeted anyone who — with the intention of provoking terror; intimidating the population; promoting a political, religious or ideological cause; or constraining the Government, an organization or an institution to adopt or reject a position or to act according to certain principles — committed or threatened to commit an act that took the life of or gravely injured another person. The same applied to anyone who recruited one or more persons to become part of an organized criminal group with a view to participating in the commission of terrorist acts. Lastly, anyone affiliated with an association or who participated in a group that planned or committed terrorist acts fell under the scope of the law. Africa did not have the means to meet the terrorist threat, and for that reason Côte d'Ivoire hoped that greater efforts would be made on behalf of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, whose action was crucial to assuring security in that part of Africa and eradicating international terrorism. His delegation therefore called for the adoption of an international counter-terrorism convention under the auspices of the United Nations.

2. **Ms. Onanga** (Gabon) said that no cause, ideology or religion could justify the atrocities committed recently in Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, London, Nigeria, Spain and Las Vegas. Her Government condemned such heinous acts, whose perpetrators showed no respect for human life and values, and expressed its condolences to the Governments and peoples affected by them.

3. Gabon had ratified almost all the United Nations instruments that formed the legal framework for international efforts to combat terrorism. While all countries were subject to the scourge of terrorism, they did not all have equal capacity to combat the sophisticated methods employed by terrorists. Strengthened cooperation was therefore needed to maximize the effectiveness of global counter-terrorism efforts, particularly with regard to the exchange of information and the monitoring of sources of terrorist financing. Her delegation called for capacity-building assistance for developing countries that took account of their specific needs and the threats they faced, and it reiterated its call for the Committee to reach consensus on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The slowness of the negotiations to date stood in regrettable contrast to the upsurge in terrorist acts.

4. **Mr. Llorentty Solíz** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that his Government categorically condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as it was an unjustifiable crime and constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. Terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and such groups must not serve as justification for any measures to prevent and combat terrorism. Regime change, interventionism and interference in the internal affairs of other States constituted one of the fundamental reasons that had led to leadership vacuums, a weakening of order and security forces and a lack of border controls, thereby allowing terrorist and extremist groups to impose their violent ideology, perpetrate destabilizing acts and commit violations of human rights that might constitute crimes against humanity.

5. It was important to promote a more active role by States in order to combat terrorism more effectively through internal machinery, external cooperation and joint technical mechanisms, with due respect for international law, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law. However, such cooperation and technical assistance must be a function of States' requests, must not be understood as a further element of international control and must be directed primarily at national capacity-building. In that connection, his Government

welcomed the decision to establish the Office of Counter-Terrorism pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/291. It also reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and reiterated its determination to apply the principles contained in the Strategy and its four pillars and to promote all measures contained therein, the most effective way of eradicating the terrorist threat while at the same time ensuring full respect for the rule of law and human rights.

6. **Mr. Méndez Graterol** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said his Government condemned terrorist acts committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes and expressed its solidarity with the victims. It reaffirmed that terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. His Government was concerned about the negative impact of counter-terrorism efforts in connection with the application of immigration measures taken in some countries and directed against nationals of Middle Eastern and African States. It reiterated its rejection of the elaboration of unilateral lists of countries that sponsored terrorism; that practice was incompatible with international law and must stop.

7. Preventing, combating and eradicating terrorism required determined international cooperation and the adoption of effective measures based on respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant international treaties. The resurgence and spread of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Middle East and northern Africa was the result of the interventionism and armed aggression committed against Iraq and Libya in 2003 and 2011 in the framework of the so-called "policy of regime change", which had led to the dismantling of their political and institutional structures, with devastating consequences for peace, human rights and the development of those countries. The fight against terrorism called for credible efforts on the part of the international community to address conditions which bred terrorism, such as foreign occupation, poverty, oppression and human rights violations. It also required strict observance of the prohibition on the supply of weapons, financial support and the sale of oil to terrorist groups.

8. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had signed and ratified the main international counter-terrorism conventions, at both the global and the regional levels, and complied strictly with the obligations assumed therein. His Government had submitted reports on the required implementation follow-up, had reformed its legislation in order to monitor terrorism financing, chemical weapons and nuclear materials, and had strengthened its institutional capacity by modernizing its border controls and customs systems and the security of travel documents so as to prevent the movement of terrorists and trafficking in illicit substances.

9. His delegation urged all members of the international community to comply with their international obligations to ensure effective cooperation in the fight against terrorism in order to guarantee the administration of justice and the sentencing of persons convicted of terrorist acts. In that regard, his Government was still awaiting the extradition of the international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, who was responsible for blowing up a Cubana de Aviación airliner on 6 October 1976, killing 74 innocent civilians.

10. His Government supported the efforts of the working group mandated to draft an international counter-terrorism convention. It was important to elaborate definitions of terms such as terrorism and State terrorism that enjoyed international agreement and did not give rise to double standards or ambiguous interpretations.

11. **Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan) said that his Government strongly condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations. All terrorist acts were unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations, constituted serious crimes and must be condemned and prosecuted. The shielding and glorification of terrorists could not be tolerated. The sensitive geographic location of Azerbaijan and the armed conflicts in its region had made the country vulnerable to transboundary threats such as terrorism and related criminal activities. Since the end of the 1980s, Azerbaijan had repeatedly been the target of terrorist attacks that had claimed the lives of thousands of people.

12. His Government had taken comprehensive measures to strengthen the country's security and defence capabilities, border control and management, and export control systems. Azerbaijan was a party to all international and regional instruments on combating terrorism and was an active contributor to global counter-terrorism efforts. It supported international cooperation to combat terrorism as well as individual and collective efforts, including those aimed at degrading and ultimately defeating terrorist organizations and their affiliates and networks.

13. Notwithstanding the importance of addressing all conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism

Strategy, it was critical to intensify conflict-resolution efforts around the world. Areas of armed conflict, especially territories under foreign military occupation, were often exploited by terrorists, separatists and other organized criminal groups. The accumulation of armaments and munitions in areas beyond the reach of legitimate Governments and international control and the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction posed a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. Scrupulous compliance by all States with their international obligations, including the relevant Security Council resolutions, was key to ensuring that their territories were not used for terrorist, separatist and related activities, and in particular for providing financing for such activities or other forms of direct or indirect support.

14. The new Office of Counter-Terrorism must improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization to broaden efforts to promote conflict prevention, build sustainable peace and address the root causes that made terrorist recruitment possible.

15. Terrorist acts that occurred in the context of armed conflict might amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, entailing individual criminal responsibility at the national and international levels. In that regard, international cooperation on criminal matters, with mutual legal assistance as an important component, was the key to combating impunity for acts of terrorism and related criminal activities. Particular attention should be given to addressing legal consequences arising from serious breaches of obligations under peremptory norms of general international law, including the duty of States to cooperate in order to bring such breaches to an end by lawful means. Azerbaijan reiterated its determination to contribute actively to the process of reaching an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that would provide a universal definition of the crime of terrorism and complement the existing legal framework of international counter-terrorism instruments.

16. His Government commended the counter-terrorism efforts of regional organizations, including those of which Azerbaijan was a member, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia.

17. The war on terrorism must not be used to target any religion or culture. United Nations support for initiatives on intercultural and interfaith dialogue and a culture of peace and multiculturalism was essential for promoting tolerance, building inclusive and resilient societies and overcoming stereotypes and misconceptions.

18. **Mr. Boukadoum** (Algeria) said that his Government reiterated its strong condemnation of terrorist acts in all their forms and manifestations, regardless of their motivations, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. It was determined to continue its struggle against terrorism and violent extremism as well as against all misconceptions and the tendentious association of terrorism with any religion, civilization or geographical area. The fight against terrorism must include a fight against xenophobia and Islamophobia, which were emerging as new faces of violent extremism. His delegation reiterated its support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its review process and stressed the importance of strengthening efforts within the Strategy by enhancing cooperation at the bilateral, regional and international levels, strengthening capabilities and exchanging best practices and expertise on combating terrorism.

19. For its part, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre had proved to be a useful institution which added value to United Nations efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force also played an important role by ensuring overall coordination and coherence and assisting Member States in terms of technical support, policy-making and capacity-building.

20. Efforts to combat terrorism could be enhanced by advancing the work on finalizing a comprehensive convention on the subject. It was important to agree on a definition of terrorism that was in line with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 46/51 and other related documents. His delegation also supported the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a common position on eliminating terrorism.

21. The prevention of terrorism required continued vigilance, mobilization and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. Punitive measures alone were not sufficient; a coherent political strategy was also needed. Algeria had made considerable progress in eliminating terrorism and violent extremism, thereby consolidating its reconciliation policy. His country's efforts to combat terrorism and improve regional and international awareness and

cooperation predated the manifestation of major acts of international terrorism. Algeria had pioneered many counter-terrorism initiatives and instruments that continued to play an important role in the African region.

22. The African Union, for its part, had demonstrated its commitment to the fight against terrorism through its decision condemning the payment of ransom to terrorist groups, the appointment of a Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation and the establishment of a subcommittee on terrorism within its Peace and Security Council. The memorandum which Algeria had submitted at the African Union Summit in July 2017 in Addis Ababa, and which had been unanimously adopted by the 55 Member States, contained seven priority segments for action in fighting terrorism and would also serve as a platform for cooperation between Africa and the international community.

23. Algeria continued its efforts to enhance coordination and cooperation to strengthen the capacities of the countries of the Sahel region. It had engaged in a concerted approach through many cooperation mechanisms, including the Sahel Region Capacity-Building Working Group of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, co-chaired with Canada, the Joint Military Staff Committee of the Sahel Region and the Sahel Fusion and Liaison Unit, and it would co-chair, also with Canada, the new working group on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa. The military deployments on the country's borders helped to ensure the national security not only of Algeria but also of its neighbours. His Government also continued to contribute to the promotion of peace and stability in the Maghreb, northern Mali and the Sahel, while fully respecting the principles of State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

24. Algeria would continue to contribute to efforts to put an end to terrorism and violent extremism, including through the work of the Sixth Committee.

25. **Mr. Moussa** (Djibouti) said that the past two decades had witnessed a growing entanglement of traditional and non-traditional factors of insecurity. Eastern Africa had been one of the first regions to be victim of the ideological assaults and attacks perpetrated by extremist terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab. The new dangers called for responses that took account of the numerous reasons behind the propagation of extremist ideologies and narratives. Any response must be based on a balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, bearing in mind that violent extremism was not associated with any religion, race, culture or society.

26. Over the years, the member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had become more resilient in the face of terrorism, and in February 2017 they had adopted a plan of action to combat it. It was in that context that, since March, Djibouti had hosted the Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, the first of its nature in Africa. It was essential for bilateral partners and United Nations bodies to contribute financially so as to ensure the continuation of the centre's activities.

27. The purpose of the centre was in line with the action taken by Djibouti over the past ten years. As a bridgehead for international efforts to support the reconstruction of Somalia and combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden, Djibouti had become aware early on of the role of groups propagating extremist ideologies. In 2014, at the initiative of President Ismail Omar Guelleh, it had adopted a proactive approach, organizing meetings with the main religious leaders of the region to identify methodological tools for combating the ideological recruitment of which the most vulnerable members of society were at risk. At the national level, its strategy was based on theological dialogue, the voluntary involvement of young people in public works and respect for and promotion of individual and collective freedoms.

28. Given its belief in a culture of peace, and to ensure the triumph of the values and ideals of mutual comprehension, in July 2017 Djibouti had formally joined the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

29. **Mr. Luna** (Brazil) said that terrorism must be condemned in all its forms and manifestations. The repudiation of terrorism was enshrined in the Brazilian Constitution as a guiding principle of its foreign policy. Brazil was signatory to 14 international legal instruments against terrorism negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations and to the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. It had also adopted domestic legislation to facilitate the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and establish a definition of terrorism.

30. While States were united in their desire to eliminate international terrorism, the questionable legality of some counter-terrorism measures made them divisive. Counter-terrorism efforts would undermine the values they sought to uphold and foster extremism conducive to terrorism if they did not respect the Charter of the United Nations and

international law, in particular international human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law. In that connection, efforts to combat the use of new communications technologies by terrorist organizations must not infringe on the rights to freedom of expression and privacy. The surveillance or interception of communications by States, including extraterritorially, could have a negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights.

31. Furthermore, the Security Council must conduct proper follow-up to the increasing number of letters it was receiving from States seeking to justify the use of military force in the context of counter-terrorism, in most cases after the fact, and determine whether the States in question were fulfilling their obligations under the Charter. To increase transparency, Brazil suggested the creation of a dedicated session in the Council's website listing all such communications.

32. In addition to those issues, there were also concerns stemming from attempts to reinterpret the law regarding the content and scope of self-defence, especially its applicability in relation to non-State actors. Critical legal issues involving the use of force must be discussed. Some interpretations regarding the scope and content of self-defence arising in counter-terrorism scenarios might not be adequate or advisable, as they might set dangerous precedents. Silence regarding such interpretations, such as the so-called "unwilling and unable" doctrine, should not be understood as acquiescence or as proof of *opinio juris*. As the primary forum for the consideration of legal questions in the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee was an appropriate venue for such discussions, which should take into due account the views of the International Court of Justice on the matter.

33. The current absence of a universally agreed definition of international terrorism was detrimental to the common goal of eliminating it. His delegation underscored the importance of overcoming the stalemate in negotiations on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism as a matter of urgency and of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Those initiatives would help to improve the coordination of joint efforts and help to ensure that all measures respected due process and human rights.

34. It was important to have a proper understanding of the linkages between terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism. Although those three phenomena could be linked in specific circumstances, as in ISIL recruitment efforts, they were not automatically related. Racism, xenophobia and homophobia, for example, could lead to forms of violent extremism that had nothing to do with terrorism. The conflation of the concepts of violent extremism and terrorism could lead to the justification of an overly broad application of counter-terrorism measures, including against forms of conduct that should not qualify as terrorist acts.

35. Nor did terrorism have universal or intrinsic linkages with transnational organized crime. While terrorism represented a threat to international peace and security, transnational organized crime was a matter of public security.

36. Brazil had been attentive to prevention not only domestically, but also at the multilateral and regional levels. The threat of terrorism could only be countered through approaches that addressed its underlying causes, in particular protracted conflicts and social, political, economic and cultural exclusion. Since terrorist groups attracted recruits by providing a false sense of purpose, belonging and identity, addressing legitimate grievances and promoting inclusion should be key elements of counter-terrorism efforts.

37. It was crucial to dispel the stereotypes that associated terrorism with specific cultures, religions or ethnicities and to eliminate discriminatory laws, prejudice and xenophobia. Responses to the refugee crisis should reduce, rather than increase, the risks associated with violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

38. The centrality of the United Nations in counter-terrorism efforts must be preserved. Brazil welcomed the recent establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. The reform of the counter-terrorism architecture would provide leadership and create conditions for enhanced coordination within the system, and the Organization would be better equipped to implement all four pillars of its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a balanced manner.

39. His delegation joined previous speakers in encouraging further reflection on how the current agenda item could be more efficiently used so as to avoid overlap and duplication with the policy discussions held biennially at plenary level at the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy reviews. One alternative would be to focus the debates in the Sixth Committee on the outstanding legal questions, especially the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

40. **Mr. Hammad** (Bahrain) said that his country had made enormous efforts to combat international terrorism. It was committed to combating terrorism in

cooperation with other countries in its region and elsewhere. In that regard, it had acceded to a number of international and regional counter-terrorism instruments. It had listed several groups, including ISIL, Al-Qaida and Hizbullah, as terrorist organizations, and supported the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

41. Bahrain congratulated Iraq on its extraordinary success in liberating parts of the country from ISIL, with the support of the international coalition, in which Bahrain participated actively.

42. Stability and security in the Middle East called for cooperation based on the principles of non-interference in domestic affairs, good-neighbourly relations and respect for international instruments; only in that way could the threat of terrorism be overcome. Bahrain rejected those who supported and financed terrorism, whether States, entities or individuals. The use of terrorism by some States to undermine others was a destabilizing factor in the region.

43. Bahrain had worked to establish regional partnerships in respect of maritime security. A summit meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council had been held in May in Saudi Arabia with the participation of the United States of America, at which a memorandum of understanding had been signed to curb sources of finance. There was also a strategic plan against extremist thinking.

44. Bahrain had been a member of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative since 2004, and it was committed to implementing the relevant counter-terrorism resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), and to submitting the regular reports which those resolutions required.

45. His Government was working to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and FATF recommendations, and was closely monitoring its borders and other control points and implementing laws and regulations in that respect. At the regional level, Bahrain and fraternal countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council had adopted a security strategy to fight extremism and terrorism; they had signed the Muscat Declaration on Terrorism in 2002 and set up a special counter-terrorism committee in 2006.

46. At the national level, Bahrain had adopted several acts and regulations on countering terrorism, such as Act No. 58 (2006) on the protection of society from terrorist acts and the amendments thereto, which included a section on terrorist crimes and established the post of special prosecutor for terrorist matters, and Decree No. 4 (2001) on the prohibition of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In 2001, a committee had been established to elaborate policies on prohibiting and combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In 2014 Bahrain had hosted an international conference on countering the financing of terrorism. In implementation of the outcome of that conference, a workshop had been held in 2015 on the protection of civil society organizations from the threat of terrorism and possible means of addressing the phenomenon without undermining the activities of those bodies.

47. Bahrain reiterated its rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

48. **Mr. Ayebare** (Uganda) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Acts of terrorism were unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations and by whomsoever committed.

49. Terrorism must not be attributed to any culture or religion. The international community must address its root causes, including poverty, and it was also important to have a definition of terrorism that differentiated it from legitimate struggles.

50. His delegation supported efforts to improve the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to achieve a consensus regarding a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It endorsed the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

51. Over the years, Uganda had succeeded in driving terrorist groups out of its territory, but they continued to operate from neighbouring countries. All States must cooperate to eradicate those groups. Under the auspices of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Uganda had played a central role in fighting Al-Shabaab. Efforts should be stepped up to assist Somalia in developing institutions capable of dealing with terrorist organizations that regarded that country as a safe haven for their activities. Ultimately, recourse to the judicial process was imperative in combating terrorism. In the meantime, Uganda would pursue the military option.

52. Uganda reiterated its concern that the toxic waste dump off the coast of Somalia might constitute an arsenal for terrorists in their quest for weapons of mass destruction. The dumping must stop, and those responsible must ensure that it was cleaned up.

53. **Mr. Pandyal** (Nepal) said that, as noted by the Prime Minister of Nepal during his address to the

General Assembly in September, violent extremism had undermined peace and security in different parts of the world, with more youths being radicalized, with more lives being devastated, and societies turning intolerant. Nepal reiterated its unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever it might occur. Terrorism was a threat to human rights, democracy and development. Efforts to combat terrorism had been too little and often too late, hence the importance of the role of the United Nations. In that context, his delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

54. The universal instruments highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1) constituted legally binding obligations to prosecute, suppress and cooperate in response to terrorist acts. Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004) also created reporting and implementation obligations for Member States. It was time to enforce those instruments and resolutions and to work to address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism.

55. Nepal was a party to a number of international counter-terrorism instruments and to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its additional protocol. It called on the international community to seek common ground in order to elaborate a more comprehensive international legal instrument to address the many new challenges in the field. Due consideration should also be given to the proposal to convene a high-level international counter-terrorism conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

56. Nepal supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and had been implementing it. The promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance, respect for diversity and the dignity of humankind, which was deeply ingrained in its societal values, had been incorporated into school curricula and youth programmes. Nepal had continuously invested in the capacity-building of its law-enforcement agencies. The capacity-building of Member States lacking in resources, technology and information must receive support. Although it was necessary to be firm in combating terrorism, measures to ensure respect for human rights must be upheld at all times.

57. It was important to build on the achievements made in controlling the financing of terrorism, including through legal assistance and information sharing.

58. **Mr. George** (Sierra Leone) said that the terrorist threat must never be perceived as a problem of only one country or region. Sierra Leone had consistently condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and it reiterated its unequivocal condemnation of indiscriminate terrorist attacks around the world.

59. His Government reaffirmed the importance of working closely to improve the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to step up efforts aimed at addressing the problem through the effective implementation of regional and national counter-terrorism and de-radicalization programmes. It was also striving to strengthen collaboration with religious leaders who had embarked on nationwide public awareness campaigns to delink religion from terrorism and stress the importance of maintaining peace.

60. Sierra Leone underscored the need to achieve consensus on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and it reaffirmed its support for the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations in further articulating an international response to terrorism. It highlighted the importance of being proactive in preventing violent extremism by engaging all members of society, including non-State actors, youth and disadvantaged persons, through timely intelligence-sharing and condemnation of terrorism.

61. **Ms. Jeon** Yu Jin (Republic of Korea) said that her country firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. No cause could justify those acts of violence.

62. The adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy had created a sound basis for serving as a strategic leader on counter-terrorism issues. Her delegation also welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and looked forward to working with it in implementing the four pillars of the Strategy.

63. Given the lack of adequate enforcement mechanisms in the international community, it was vital that each country fully implement its obligations under the relevant conventions and United Nations resolutions at the national level.

64. The Republic of Korea was a party to all the major universal conventions against terrorism. In 2016, her Government had enacted an anti-terrorism law and established a national counter-terrorism centre within the Prime Minister's office. It had also been developing a national action plan to prevent violent extremism.

with the aim of submitting the plan to the United Nations by the end of 2017.

65. The Republic of Korea had also participated in regional efforts to build capacity within Asia for preventing violent extremism through outreach programmes in countries vulnerable to that phenomenon. It had carried out projects in developing countries in education and vocational training to support their efforts to tackle the root cause of violent extremism. The Financial Action Task Force's Training and Research Institute established in 2016 in Busan had also provided education programmes and carried out research on combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

66. The Republic of Korea was a sponsor of the "Tech Against Terrorism" project, an initiative pursuant to Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) to help start-ups build practical tools and develop their responses for combating terrorism and extremism on their platforms while reinforcing the importance of human rights and protecting fundamental freedoms.

67. Terrorism fed on discrimination, exclusion and inequality. A comprehensive and holistic approach was therefore crucial to dealing with the evolving scope and nature of terrorist threats and to reintegrating extremists into society. In that regard, her Government supported the efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which aimed at addressing the key components of terrorism, notably terrorists, weapons, funding and networks.

68. Her Government stressed the importance of implementing obligations under international law and respecting the fundamental values of the international community. The persistence and severity of terrorist attacks, flagrantly violating human rights and destroying society, were a reminder that countering terrorism was an indispensable part of promoting human rights and the rule of law. It was time to redouble efforts to that end by developing a normative and legal framework that encompassed shared values.

69. Negotiations for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism had remained at an impasse. The scale and dimension of current threats called for flexibility in order to bring the negotiations to a close.

70. *Mr. Ivchare (Uganda), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

71. **Mr. Morejon Pazmiño** (Ecuador) said that terrorism was a serious threat to the international community. Ecuador unequivocally condemned all terrorist acts committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, regardless of the entity that perpetrated them, including State terrorism, whether committed directly or indirectly.

72. Joint, concerted measures were needed to counteract terrorism; any such action must strictly comply with public international law and international human rights law and must respect State sovereignty. Ecuador rejected the use or threat of force against any State on the pretext of combating terrorism, as well as the unilateral preparation of lists of certain States. All measures adopted outside the framework of the Charter of the United Nations were illegal and illegitimate.

73. Prevention of terrorism was equally important, and it was therefore essential to identify factors that might promote acts of terrorism, including its financing, political, ethnic, religious and racial intolerance, and social and economic inequality between nations.

74. Ecuador supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars, and it welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

75. His delegation would continue to work towards the finalization of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To reach a consensus, it was important to consider all points of view and incorporate the legitimate concerns of all Member States. His delegation was in favour of an open consultation process to achieve progress in that regard.

76. **Mr. Bukoree** (Mauritius) said that his Government strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It was more important than ever for States and international organizations to cooperate fully in the fight against terrorism in accordance with their obligations under international law. Coordination among States should be strengthened and cooperation intensified for the exchange of timely and accurate information aimed at preventing and combating terrorism.

77. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would provide leadership, coordination and coherence, strengthen the Organization's counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States and improve the visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for its counter-terrorism efforts.

78. In 2016, substantive legislative amendments had been made in Mauritius to the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2002 in order to strengthen the legal framework for combating terrorism. In line with the Government Programme 2015-2019, the Counter-Terrorism Unit now had the legal status needed to discharge its

functions more effectively and efficiently. The amendments also addressed issues such as terrorist training, whether inland or overseas, recruitment by terrorist groups and terrorist hoaxes, together with special powers of inquiry, and the use of technologies for surveillance and intelligence-gathering.

79. His Government was working on its national counter-terrorism strategy, with an emphasis on community bonding, law enforcement, intelligence-gathering and response and recovery, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Intercultural dialogue in the country's multi-ethnic and multi-faith society helped in overcoming barriers and promoting a culture of peace, justice, human development, tolerance and respect for different religions and cultures. Those were essential elements in tackling the root causes of terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism, which very often arose in situations of extreme poverty, inequality, marginalization and discrimination.

80. Mauritius was a party to several international treaties containing the obligation to apprehend, prosecute or extradite perpetrators of terrorist acts. Its Constitution safeguarded the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, including freedom of conscience.

81. **Ms. Sankareh-Farage** (Gambia) said that her country was at the forefront of the fight against terrorism and all its forms and manifestations. Committed to that endeavour, it had ratified all international treaties against terrorism and terrorist acts. It had enacted a number of laws, including the Anti-Money-Laundering Act and the Human Trafficking in Persons Act, to advance its efforts to combat all forms of terrorism and related activities. Her Government was willing to share intelligence on terrorism and related activities with the international community and encouraged all Member States to do likewise.

82. Her delegation called on Member States to reject Islamophobia: Islam and Muslims were not at war with the world, and the world must not be at war with Islam and Muslims. World leaders must denounce those who repeatedly claimed that there was a connection between Islam and terrorism. Member States must focus on ways of ending terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

83. **Mr. Elshenawy** (Egypt) said that the world was facing an unprecedented resurgence of terrorism, a challenge that called for unconventional global action. The international response must be non-selective and must tackle terrorism's root causes, without relying solely on military and security measures, and it must at the same time ensure strict compliance with obligations under human rights law and international law.

84. At the national level, Egypt had been addressing the residual elements of terrorism, covering all counter-terrorism aspects. All stakeholders of civil society participated in that endeavour. In that connection, Decree 355 (2017) had called for the establishment of a national council to counter terrorism and extremism, to be tasked with drafting a global national strategy to combat the phenomenon both at home and abroad, coordinating with religious institutions and State security agencies to elaborate ways of countering terrorist narratives, and making recommendations for relevant legal amendments.

85. Egypt had actively participated in the fifth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and would do so during the sixth review in 2018. It had been one of the countries that had called for the setting up of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, and it looked forward to the Office working to coordinate the efforts of the various United Nations counter-terrorism bodies to avoid duplication, thereby boosting the effectiveness of such action. The Office should also give greater assistance to States in complying with their obligations, building their counter-terrorism capacities, based on the principle of national ownership, and implementing their national counter-terrorism strategies and the four pillars in a balanced fashion. Egypt also paid tribute to the work of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, and it stood ready to contribute to any such counter-terrorism efforts, given its vast experience in that area.

86. In the context of his country's membership of the Security Council, and at its initiative, the Security Council had adopted the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives, the first document of its kind to address terrorist narratives and ideologies and messages. The Security Council had then adopted resolution 2354 (2017) to implement the Framework. It had also adopted resolution 2370 (2017) to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons. Those three documents had been added to the counter-terrorism infrastructure.

87. As Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Egypt had convened a series of meetings and briefings on various aspects of counter-terrorism, such as prevention of the financing of terrorism, prevention of the use of the Internet and the social media to promote terrorism, prevention of the supply of weapons and the use of safe havens for terrorists, the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and mutual legal assistance.

Participation in those meetings should be broadened to include the wider membership of the United Nations and relevant organizations, and not just members of the Security Council.

88. His Government stressed the need to ensure that terrorist ideologies were not used to recruit new combatants, especially among young people, and it highlighted the important role of religious institutions in countering terrorist narratives.

89. His delegation underscored the importance of implementing all General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on terrorism. In particular, it was unacceptable to give terrorists safe havens and to allow them to transit countries to travel to combat zones. Anyone who assisted terrorists or aided and abetted their acts in any way, as well as those who offered pretexts to justify assistance to terrorists, must be brought to justice.

90. It was to be hoped that progress would be made at the current session on the finalization of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, including a clear definition of terrorism. The convening of an international counter-terrorism conference was all the more urgent, given the need to harmonize the plethora of counter-terrorism efforts and avoid duplication.

91. The item "Measures to eliminate international terrorism" must remain an annual item on the General Assembly's agenda. It was not logical — given that counter-terrorism was one of the priorities of the United Nations — to find proposals that the item should be considered only every two years.

92. **Mr. Kim** In Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism would help implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and improve international cooperation on combating the phenomenon.

93. The root cause of the terrorism crisis continued to be the aggression, intervention and murderous atrocities being committed by one particular country against sovereign States under the pretext of a "war on terror", thereby gravely undermining world peace and security. As a result of the terrorist wars waged by the United States, the total number of refugees worldwide had increased to 65 million. In essence, its "war on terror" amounted to State terrorism — a new form of a war of aggression aimed at regime change in countries that did not support the United States.

94. As recently as May 2017, the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had arrested a group of terrorists who had infiltrated the country on the orders of the United States Central Intelligence Agency and the National Intelligence Service of South Korea to carry out a State-sponsored terrorist attack against the nation's supreme headquarters using biological and chemical substances.

95. The international community must take care not to fall victim to the "war on terrorism" waged by the United States, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

96. Consistent with its opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had acceded to a number of international counter-terrorism instruments, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Its Government would continue to work to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to ensure peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and throughout the world.

97. **Mr. Kpatamango** (Central African Republic) said that his country had not been spared the scourge of terrorism and its corollaries, violent extremism and transnational crime. On 24 March 2013, the so-called "Seleka" coalition, made up primarily of mercenaries and foreign fighters, had seized power in Bangui. In January 2014, the leader of that coalition had been forced to resign, following which Faustin Archange Touadera had been elected President in free and democratic elections. However, the security situation had continued to be alarming, with armed groups repeatedly committing massacres, rape, crimes against humanity and other violations of international law and international human rights law. Those groups were exploiting the nation's natural resources to finance their goals. The war had resulted in thousands of dead, displaced persons and refugees.

98. In an effort to put an end to the conflict, his Government had signed numerous agreements with the armed groups, most recently the Saint Egidio agreement, signed in Rome on 19 June 2017, leading to the adoption of a road map on 17 July 2017 in Libreville. In a decree of 12 September 2017, a new Government had been formed that included all the protagonists of the crisis, under the mediation of the countries of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the African Union. A disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation plan had also been implemented.

99. To ensure border security, the Central African Republic had signed a cooperation agreement with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan, which followed upon a similar agreement signed earlier with Chad and the Sudan.

100. His Government supported all the counter-terrorism efforts of the international community and firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

101. **Mr. Bazadough** (Jordan) said that terrorism and violent extremism posed a grave threat to peace and security. They endangered all members of the human race, irrespective of religion, gender or national origin. Terrorists were increasingly using the Internet to spread their obscurantist ideology and gain new recruits. The failure to end the political stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had also helped to create an enabling environment for terrorists and extremists. Jordan condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, by whomsoever it was committed and whatever their pretext. Terrorism could not be associated with any religion, denomination, civilization or race.

102. In order to combat terrorism and extremism, comprehensive plans should be formulated at the national and international levels to tackle the political, economic, social and educational dimensions of the problem. There was a need for States to exchange information and intelligence in order to bolster cooperation. It was also necessary to strengthen partnerships on border controls and between the private and public sectors.

103. Jordan had taken action in a range of areas, including security, awareness-raising and legislation. Terrorist acts had been criminalized, including recruitment, training, financing and money-laundering. His Government also worked to promote values of tolerance and reject hate speech, based on the Amman Message, the "Common Word between Us and You" initiative and the World Interfaith Harmony Week. Jordan had also focused on protecting young people from terrorist ideology. In so doing, it had acted in accordance with the Amman Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security, which had been announced by the Crown Prince further to Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security, which was the first of its kind. In cooperation with Norway, Jordan had set up the Group of Friends on Preventing Violent Extremism, which included 40 States and sought to raise awareness of violent extremism and its root causes. The Group of Friends would work to institutionalize combating violent extremism in the context of the activities of the United Nations, and it would support the Office of Counter-Terrorism. It would act as a discussion portal on combating violent extremism between United Nations counter-terrorism entities, Governments, civil society and other stakeholders.

104. All efforts must be pooled at the international level to combat terrorism in a unified and systematic way and in order to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Jordan would support all efforts to establish a legal framework for international cooperation to combat terrorism, consistent with international law.

105. **Mr. Fialho Rocha** (Cabo Verde) said that his country strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There was no justification for terrorism, which was a global problem that called for a global response. The United Nations must continue to be at the centre of counter-terrorism efforts. Cabo Verde pledged its support to the Office of Counter-Terrorism in its work.

106. His Government stressed the importance of adherence to the international and regional instruments and to the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relating to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. Cabo Verde was a party to 15 counter-terrorism instruments and complied with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

107. However, the ultimate proof of the international community's determination to combat terrorism would be the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on terrorism. The lack of progress on the drafting of such an instrument because of the inability of States to find common ground favoured terrorist groups and other criminal organizations. His delegation called on all States to resolve all outstanding issues, with a view to enhancing technology transfer, capacity-building, information- and intelligence-sharing, and exchange of experiences and best practices. Such measures were of great importance for small countries like Cabo Verde, which needed the capacity to fight terrorist-related activities, such as money-laundering, recruitment of nationals and other forms of international organized crime whose profits were used to finance terrorism.

108. Global initiatives should be complemented by regional and local measures to counter terrorism. Cabo Verde was located in a region affected by the presence of terrorist and other criminal groups, which posed a serious threat to peace and stability in the region as well as to economic activities, above all tourism. Cabo Verde was particularly concerned about the various

forms of organized crimes in West Africa, such as drug trafficking, human trafficking and cybercrime, and had taken advantage of the support provided by the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa.

109. At the national level, in addition to criminalizing terrorist activities, in 2013 Cabo Verde had enacted Law 27, which established preventive and repressive measures to counter terrorism and its financing, criminalized terrorist organizations, defined terrorist acts and created conditions for the freezing of assets of all entities and persons involved in the financing of terrorism.

110. Success in the fight against terrorism depended on the international community's ability to tackle its root causes, including poverty, social exclusion and misinformation. The fight against terrorism must also be carried out with due respect for the rule of law, human rights law, humanitarian law and the principle of human dignity.

111. **Mr. del Rosario Ceba** (Dominican Republic) said that his Government reiterated its total condemnation of all acts of terrorism, which were unjustifiable crimes, and reaffirmed its commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law. Terrorism could only be effectively contained through greater international cooperation.

112. It was crucial to address the conditions that favoured the spread of terrorism, such as prolonged unresolved conflicts, discrimination of all kinds, the dehumanization of the victims, the lack of the rule of law, human rights violations and prolonged social, political, economic and cultural exclusion, but none of those conditions could justify acts of terrorism.

113. His delegation stressed the importance of promoting a culture of peace that rejected all forms of discrimination and encouraged respect for cultural, religious and political diversity, which was characteristic for Latin America and the Caribbean.

114. Respect for international law was a prerequisite for a successful fight against terrorism. Any measures adopted outside the international legal framework were not only illegal but also unjustifiable and unacceptable, betrayed the values that the international community was seeking to uphold and might fuel violent extremism, which could lead to terrorism. His delegation noted in that regard the reference in General Assembly resolution 70/148 to the need to safeguard the right to privacy, which was fundamental to protecting persons against abuse of power.

115. It was important to increase awareness of the need to protect the victims of terrorism, especially women and children.

116. His Government expressed serious concern about the growing threat of foreign terrorist fighters, which affected all Member States, whether countries of origin, of transit or of destination.

117. His delegation was concerned about the negative impact that the lack of a definition of terrorism might have on human rights and due process. The finalization of a legal definition was a pre-condition to strengthening the rule of law both nationally and internationally.

118. The convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations and the process leading to a comprehensive convention on international terrorism could not be postponed indefinitely. That unjustifiable legal lacuna must be overcome. Both initiatives would strengthen the rule of law in the fight against international terrorism by providing a clear legal framework and ensuring more coherent joint efforts.

119. The fight against international terrorism could only be conducted by strictly legitimate legal means that were in compliance with international human rights norms, international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations.

120. **Ms. Sande** (Uruguay) said that her Government condemned terrorism in all its forms, and it had ratified a number of counter-terrorism conventions. Cooperation between States, by means of bilateral and multilateral norms, was crucial to combating those who perpetrated terrorist acts against humanity.

121. Given the speed with which the Internet made it possible to commit terrorist acts and the lack of updated domestic and international legislation in that regard, the international community must act swiftly to promote agreements on criminal matters, extradition and domestic legislation to combat the preparation and commission of illicit acts.

122. For its part, Uruguay had introduced strict measures for the control of bank deposits to prevent and counteract the financing of terrorism and money laundering. A number of bills and administrative decrees were being prepared to launch a counter-terrorism action strategy.

123. **Ms. Gebremedhin** (Eritrea), reiterating her Government's unequivocal condemnation of violent

extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, said that any action taken to combat terrorism must be consistent with international law. Acts of terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

124. The crisis in the Red Sea Basin and the potential spread of terrorism and violent extremism to the rest of the region was a matter of serious concern. Eritrea, while stable, secure and harmonious, had long experience in fighting radicalization, extremism and terrorism, and it had committed itself at national, regional and international levels to the global effort to combat and eliminate terrorism. To cite one example, in 2014 an extensive national counter-terrorism course had been conducted by the Intergovernmental Support Services and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization for more than 30 officers. That type of regional response had been created to fight transnational and organized crime and harmonize national activities.

125. Eritrea continued to strengthen its cultural and legal instruments to prevent and combat all types of extremism and terrorism. One achievement had been the recently published Criminal Codes. The Code of Criminal Procedure had been recently revised to include questions of jurisdiction and extradition, as well as stiffer punishment. Current work with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) included issues relating to the legal framework and other counter-terrorism programmes. A UNODC working group was holding talks with all law enforcement agencies and other government officials, through which wide-ranging projects were being developed.

126. It was important to strengthen the capacity of Member States through the provision of operational and technical advice and support, training and other forms of capacity-building so as to address issues relating to terrorism and help them implement their international obligations.

127. Eritrea supported United Nations efforts to counter the threat of terrorism and called for a balanced implementation of the four strategic pillars. It had co-sponsored Security Council resolution 2178 (2016), which aimed to strengthen international cooperation on combating all forms of extremism and terrorism.

128. Eritrea was a country in which Christians and Muslims lived together in harmony. The Horn of Africa, where Eritrea was located, was very vulnerable to the threat of terrorist infiltration, hence the need to strengthen cooperation and enhance the capability of States and regional and international organizations to combat that threat. In that connection, the unjustified restrictions imposed on some States must be lifted, because they could undermine their ability to fight terrorism.

129. The root causes of terrorism and radicalization, such as poverty, social marginalization, lack of access to resources and a sense of injustice, must be addressed. The promotion of sustainable and inclusive development was crucial in that regard.

130. **Mr. Ahmat** (Chad) said that his Government was determined to combat terrorism in all its forms, wherever it might occur. For that reason, it welcomed the establishment of an Office of Counter-Terrorism to help address the phenomenon.

131. Notwithstanding the size of the country, Chad was making efforts to ensure security within its borders. Together with its neighbours, it operated joint patrols to deter criminal activities. Although Chad had not experienced cases of violent extremism, his Government was involving all segments of the population, including religious and traditional leaders, through campaigns to raise awareness of terrorism.

132. Chad also focused on regional security. It had involved its army in several areas, notably in Mali, where it had a large contingent in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in the Chad Lake region through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) and through its strong participation in the establishment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. Those initiatives deserved to be encouraged by the international community, and the United Nations should accompany those efforts through multifaceted support.

133. Terrorism and extremist violence were brought about by poverty, and in particular by unemployment among young people, who were easy prey for terrorist groups. In response, the international community must support development programmes and projects initiated in the framework of Sahel development strategies. Moreover, the Security Council must find ways and means of putting an end to armed conflicts around the world.

134. The implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions to combat terrorism and extremism in all their forms would also help meet the challenge of foreign fighters. The fight against terrorism and trans-boundary crime called for closer cooperation between States and a better coordination of their

action, and technical and financial support for existing local structures.

135. It was to be hoped that the new Office of Counter-Terrorism, in cooperation with existing mechanisms, including the African Union and subregional entities, would succeed in defeating the scourge of terrorism.

136. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that his country, in the past a haven of peace and stability, had been the victim of acts of terrorism and extremist violence since January 2012. Terrorist groups had been regularly and indiscriminately attacking national defence and security forces, humanitarian and human rights organizations and fraternal international forces. Not even women, children, the elderly or persons with disabilities had been spared. The country's efforts to ensure stability and development had been undermined by the presence and criminal activities of terrorist organizations.

137. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and hoped that it would lead to a more coherent and efficient coordination of the fight against terrorism.

138. At the national level, Mali had elaborated a strategy to combat terrorism and violent extremism, together with a plan of action, in order to seek solutions to the root causes of terrorism, bearing in mind local realities. The goals were to support mechanisms for interfaith dialogue; train religious leaders; promote the traditional sources of stability in the community; introduce education on a culture of peace, human rights and democracy in school curricula; and finance projects for the empowerment of women and young people, in particular decent employment for youths.

139. A national legal framework in line with the country's international obligations was in place to promote the fight against terrorism; it included provisions for the punishment of perpetrators and the protection of victims. His Government had also adopted a national strategy to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, and a national unit for the processing of financial data had been operational since June 2008.

140. Mali underscored the importance of regional and international cooperation for combating organized transnational crime effectively. That awareness had led to the creation of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger and Mali to meet the security and development challenges facing those countries. Their Heads of State had decided that they would soon deploy a joint force to combat terrorism, transnational crime and trafficking in migrants. Mali called on friendly countries and international organizations to support the launch and operation of the joint force, which would help create conditions for development in those countries.

141. His delegation underlined the need for Member States to agree on a definition of terrorism without further delay in order to arrive at a shared understanding of the phenomenon, which would guarantee effective international cooperation for eradicating terrorism.

142. **Mr. Abdullahi** (Nigeria) said that terrorism continued to be a threat to all countries, big and small, and regardless of location; hence the need to develop an all-inclusive and collaborative approach to cope with that phenomenon.

143. Nigeria was continuing its efforts to confront the terrorist organization Boko Haram, which had been degraded and driven out of many areas in the north-eastern part of the country. His Government had introduced many measures to fight that threat on different fronts while ensuring compliance with human rights obligations. In August 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari had launched the revised National Counter-Terrorism Strategy and had urged Nigerians to participate in the psychological battle against terrorism, and he had also called for multisectoral collaboration and urged all government bodies to take part in the Strategy. The revised Strategy had succeeded in uniting all Nigerians in the fight against Boko Haram, regardless of their religious, tribal and political affiliations.

144. Nigeria had trained its military forces in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency on subjects ranging from urban patrol to unarmed combat and humanitarian law and had equipped them accordingly. The special forces of the Nigerian military had been training a mobile strike team of officers of the Nigerian security and civil defence corps and the Nigerian police.

145. Nigeria had also developed a huge capacity for the prompt and timely prosecution of Boko Haram suspects. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force had trained many government officials in the areas of human rights, rule of law and counter-terrorism.

146. A programme focused on de-radicalization, rehabilitation, reorientation and reintegration of repentant Boko Haram suspects. To assist the victims of Boko Haram, his Government had opened a victim

support fund and a presidential initiative for the northeast as well as a safe schools initiative, which had facilitated the provision of humanitarian relief and promoted socioeconomic stabilization and resettlement of persons displaced by the terror organization.

147. Nigeria had made significant progress in the fight against terrorism through international cooperation with a number of friendly countries, in particular Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Benin, which had come together within the framework of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to form the Multinational Joint Task Force. The Security Council had commended the important progress made by the Multinational Joint Task Force in combating Boko Haram.

148. His Government's commitment to fight international terrorism had also been demonstrated by its support for the convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations in order to formulate a joint response by the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

149. Member States must ensure full compliance with all United Nations resolutions and conventions to combat terrorism and its financing as well as with other instruments adopted at regional levels. That would constitute a valuable framework for cooperation among Member States.

150. His delegation reaffirmed his Government's commitment to work closely with all United Nations counter-terrorism entities, including the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism *(continued)* (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1)

1. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the memory and pain of victims should spur the international community to work harder to eliminate international terrorism. Worldwide cooperation, international solidarity and multilateral effort were required to combat terrorism, which was a threat to global peace and security, the first pillar of the United Nations. The Organization as a whole, and each Member State, had a responsibility to protect all from that threat. Indeed, the United Nations was uniquely positioned to facilitate the negotiation and adoption of multilateral policies and strategies to combat international terrorism.

2. The Holy See applauded the General Assembly's decision to establish a working group within the Sixth Committee to foster more cohesive measures at the international level by finalizing the work on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and by considering the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Heightened international cohesion was necessary in order to deny terrorists access to cybertechnologies, a key element in recruiting new adherents, financing their activities and coordinating terrorist attacks. International cooperation would also ensure there was no safe harbour for those who perpetrated acts of terrorism, abetted violent extremism or sheltered members of terrorist groups. Peace and global security demanded that States should put aside their differences to combat the scourge of terrorism.

3. Terrorism was an affront to human rights and the rule of law, and no ideological, political, philosophical, racial, ethnic, or religious reasons could justify or excuse it. All too often, terrorism targeted the most vulnerable and defenceless members of society, including women and children, which made the international mandate to end it all the more urgent. That urgency, however, could not justify policies and measures that sacrificed the rule of law and human dignity in the name of security. It was imperative to uphold the rule of law, adhere strictly to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and respect fundamental human rights. Otherwise, the international community would risk eroding the very values it sought to protect, alienating large parts of the world population and diminishing the moral strength of its efforts. Arbitrary application of unilateral measures, selective approaches to human rights and disregard for cultures and religions could not win hearts and minds, particularly if they appeared to be brazen demonstrations of superiority and deliberate acts of provocation.

4. Development was the key to ending terrorism by addressing its underlying causes. International conventions that buttressed fair and just societies, along with good governance, social integration of marginalized populations, inclusive education, policies that addressed economic injustice — including job opportunities for those most susceptible to terrorist propaganda — and peacebuilding efforts that promoted peaceful and inclusive societies, would all serve to counter the narratives and ideologies of terrorism. If all Governments addressed the challenges faced by the individuals and communities most at risk of radicalization and recruitment and sought to foster their social integration, the lies behind the distorted terrorist narrative and ideologies would be unmasked.

5. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine), welcoming the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, said that his delegation remained willing to work with other delegations to continue refining the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to achieve consensus regarding the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Terrorism had continued to spread globally, affecting millions of innocent civilians, causing instability in numerous countries and highlighting the need for comprehensive and balanced implementation of the four pillars of the Strategy.

6. A global threat required a global response: while national initiatives were important, only international cooperation could help to confront the terrorist threat properly. Divisive and racist rhetoric, contempt for international law, disregard for the need for prevention and refusal to address the root causes of terrorism were recipes for failure and provided pretexts that could be used by terrorists for recruitment purposes.

7. Terrorism should never be associated with any nationality, civilization or ethnic group or with any religion, especially when terrorists distorted a religion to advance their hatred and their nihilist ideas. Vanquishing terrorism meant upholding international law and rejecting all attempts to misuse the legitimate fight against it to advance illegitimate goals, justify injustice or suppress the right to self-determination of peoples, notably those under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation.

8. The State of Palestine condemned terrorism and terrorist acts, including those in which States were directly or indirectly involved. His delegation

expressed its solidarity with all victims of terrorism, wherever they were. While action to prevent and combat terrorism was necessary, such action must be in full compliance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

9. Member States had repeatedly affirmed their determination to resolve conflicts, end foreign occupation, confront oppression, eradicate poverty and promote economic growth and sustainable development, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, and they had also expressed the desire to improve intercultural understanding and ensure respect for all religions, beliefs and cultures, as a means of combating terrorism and achieving international peace and security. The international community had a collective duty to live up to those pledges and to promote a culture of peace, tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Respect for human dignity, pluralism and diversity could help shield communities from the threat of terrorism, while discrimination, segregation and xenophobia would only foster the hatred that could lead to extremism and terrorism.

10. **Mr. Sabga** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) said that terrorism negated the fundamental principle of humanity and was contrary to the objectives of international law and international humanitarian law. ICRC condemned all acts of terrorism, including those committed in the context of armed conflict, and was alarmed by the harmful effects of such acts on countries, communities and individuals.

11. ICRC was aware that the rise of terrorism was a growing concern domestically as well as internationally, and while it recognized the legitimate right of States to take the measures necessary to ensure their security and eliminate terrorism, safeguards that protected human life and dignity must be upheld. Counter-terrorism activities should be conducted with full respect for the protections afforded to all individuals by international law, in particular international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Those protections extended even to persons arrested and detained in connection with terrorism, including those designated as "foreign fighters". The detention of such individuals must always be in compliance with relevant international laws and standards, in particular rules of international humanitarian law. Independent and impartial monitoring mechanisms, such as ICRC, should be granted access to such individuals, so that they could assist the detaining authorities in ensuring that detainees were treated humanely and in conformity with international law and standards. It was in the international community's interest to ensure that the applicable legal rules were upheld, as violations of those rules could exacerbate the very phenomenon that counter-terrorism efforts were intended to fight.

12. In his view, any agreement on the terms of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be consistent with the basic principles and definitions of international humanitarian law. Inasmuch as the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism might include armed conflicts in its scope of application, ICRC deemed it essential to include a provision regulating the convention's relationship with international humanitarian law in order to minimize overlaps and contradictions between the two and preserve the integrity and relevance of international humanitarian law. In relation specifically to armed conflicts, the convention should not criminalize actions that were authorized or not prohibited under international humanitarian law, such as attacking military objectives or persons not entitled to protection against direct attacks.

13. Laws, particularly criminal laws, relating to counter-terrorism should be drafted so as to ensure that they would not impede humanitarian action. Such action included humanitarian engagement with non-State armed groups, even when they were designated as terrorists. Criminal laws dealing with terrorism should exclude from their scope of application activities that were exclusively humanitarian and impartial. Failure to exclude such activities would imply a rejection of the notion of neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action. It could also jeopardize the mission of impartial humanitarian organizations to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict, particularly in areas controlled by non-State armed groups.

Agenda item 84: The rule of law at the national and international levels (A/72/268 and A/72/861)

14. **The Deputy Secretary-General**, introducing the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities (A/72/268), said that, since the creation of the United Nations, Member States had consistently emphasized the rule of law as essential for sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights. Sustainable Development Goal 16, which included targets relating to the rule of law and equal access to justice for all, was catalytic to all the Goals. Upholding the rule of law meant combating all forms of organized crime, strengthening relevant national institutions to

prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime, and promoting and enforcing non-discriminatory laws. There was no single model for rule of law development. Continued attention was required to keep pace with how societies and the international order were evolving.

15. The United Nations rule of law assistance activities would need to be aligned with, and would be reinforced by, the Secretary-General's reform agenda, including his call for the United Nations to integrate a preventive lens into all aspects of its work. His report on the rule of law for the current session reflected that new approach and provided an honest reflection on why and how the United Nations must do better to support Member States through its rule of law activities.

16. During the reporting period, the United Nations had provided significant rule of law assistance on every continent. It had seen progress in efforts to strengthen justice and security institutions in Afghanistan, Somalia and the State of Palestine. The Organization had supported the establishment of community-oriented policing programmes in El Salvador, Pakistan and Sierra Leone. In Jordan and Lebanon, where the influx of refugees had created tensions with host communities, the United Nations was supporting national authorities to increase law enforcement capacities. It was also working to ensure access to justice for populations that were disempowered and marginalized and to prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence in countries around the world.

17. The report included a number of examples of progressive and innovative initiatives by Member States to enhance domestic justice systems and strengthen accountability for international crimes, and it highlighted progress in the codification, development and promotion of international legal frameworks on climate change, ocean affairs, human rights and other topics. It underscored the need to address the links between strengthening the rule of law on the one hand, and economic activity and environmental protection on the other, and to examine further how legal frameworks could promote economic and social inclusion and improve access to justice for the migrant community. The report also highlighted the need for United Nations rule of law assistance to address long-standing and emerging issues of global concern, including climate change, conflicts of increasing complexity, forced mass displacement, trafficking and transnational organized crime.

18. Translating the Secretary-General's reform agenda into reality would require collective efforts by the Secretariat and Member States. She therefore invited delegations to share their views on how United Nations rule of law assistance could be made more coherent and effective in improving people's lives; section V of the report proposed a number of ideas for discussion. She also invited the Committee to frame its discussions in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to the rule of law and to provide guidance on how to strengthen partnerships and cooperation among Member States, while ensuring that they had access to technical expertise to help them meet the Goals. In addition, while recognizing that the Committee did not traditionally discuss work on peace operations, she believed that it was nonetheless important for it to consider how to measure progress on United Nations rule of law support in peace operations and how to ensure that such operations were sufficiently resourced and more closely linked with country team programmes.

19. She would also welcome the Committee's views on strategies for making international accountability mechanisms more effective, cost-efficient and sustainable and for enhancing perceptions of such mechanisms among affected populations and among victims of serious crimes; on how to better evaluate the performance and impact of United Nations rule of law assistance and strengthen support to Member States in complex areas such as counter-terrorism, corruption, cybercrime and transnational organized crime; and on how to build durable partnerships on the rule of law, particularly with regional organizations and international financial institutions.

20. In his first report on the rule of law, the new Secretary-General had chosen not to put forward any recommendations on improving United Nations rule of law assistance, as he preferred to hear Member States' views on the matter. Should the Committee wish, however, he would be pleased to provide recommendations in his next report.

21. In closing, she suggested some subtopics that might be addressed in the Committee's discussions in 2018 with a view to advancing the critical priorities of the United Nations and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the country level — for example, how to use the rule of law to help eliminate poverty, reduce inequalities, support gender equality, protect the environment and create just, inclusive and strong institutions. In that connection, she asked the Committee to consider recommending the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the seventy-

third session of the General Assembly a focus on "implementation of the rule of law elements of the 2030 Agenda and sharing of best practices".

22. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels was essential to maintaining international peace and security and achieving socioeconomic development. The high-level meeting of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on the rule of law had been a milestone in the Assembly's discussions on the subject and its efforts to develop a common understanding among Member States. The Movement would spare no efforts in continuing those discussions in the Sixth Committee, in cooperation with other partners.

23. It was essential to maintain a balance between the national and international dimensions of the rule of law. The Non-Aligned Movement remained of the view that the latter dimension needed greater attention on the part of the United Nations. Efforts to foster international relations based on the rule of law should be guided by the principle of sovereign equality of States, which meant, inter alia, that all States should have an equal opportunity to participate in law-making processes at the international level. All States should comply with their obligations under treaties and customary international law. Selective application of international law must be avoided and the legitimate and legal rights of States under it respected. Prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations and peaceful settlement of disputes were the cornerstones of the rule of law at the international level.

24. The members of the Non-Aligned Movement looked forward to engaging in discussion on ways and means to further disseminate international law to strengthen the rule of law, the theme of the current year's debate. The Movement wished to emphasize the useful role that the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law played in strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels. Through its training courses in international law, the Audiovisual Library of International Law and other activities, the Programme helped to improve knowledge of international law and promote friendly relations and cooperation among States.

25. With a view to achieving full respect for international law and furthering its dissemination to strengthen the rule of law, Member States should renew their commitment to respect, defend, preserve and promote the Charter of the United Nations and the rules and principles of international law. The Movement strongly encouraged Member States to identify and pursue measures that would contribute to peace and prosperity in the world and to a just and equitable world order based on the Charter and international law. The Movement also encouraged States to settle disputes peacefully, using the mechanisms and tools established under international law. It called upon the General Assembly and the Security Council to make use, whenever appropriate, of their right under Article 96 of the Charter to request advisory opinions on legal questions from the International Court of Justice. Human rights, the rule of law and democracy were interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and all States should fulfil their obligations to promote universal respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

26. The Non-Aligned Movement remained concerned about the use of unilateral measures, which had a negative impact on the rule of law and international relations. No State or group of States had the authority to deprive other States of their legal rights for political reasons. The Movement condemned any attempt to destabilize the democratic and constitutional order in any of its members. Member States should respect the functions and powers of the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, and maintain the balance among them. Close cooperation and coordination among the principal organs was essential if the Organization was to remain relevant and capable of dealing with threats and challenges. The Movement remained concerned about the continuing encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The General Assembly should play a leading role in promoting and coordinating efforts to strengthen the rule of law.

27. Nevertheless, the international community should not supplant national authorities in their task of establishing or strengthening the rule of law at the country level. National ownership of rule of law activities was important, as was strengthening Member States' ability to fulfil their international obligations, including through enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building. United Nations funds and programmes should provide such assistance, however, solely at the request of Governments and strictly within their respective mandates. Account should be taken of the customs and the political and socioeconomic

features of each country, and the imposition of pre-established models should be avoided.

28. Appropriate mechanisms should be established to enable Member States to keep abreast of the work of the Rule of Law Unit and to ensure regular interaction between the Unit and the General Assembly. The lack of an agreed definition of the rule of law should be taken into account in the preparation of reports and in the collection, classification and evaluation of data on issues directly or indirectly related to the rule of law. The data-gathering activities of United Nations bodies should not lead to unilateral formulation of rule of law indicators or ranking of countries. Any indicators should be agreed upon by Member States in an open and transparent manner.

29. Cognizant of the importance of the rule of law within the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement appreciated the role of the Organization's administration of justice system and supported initiatives to hold United Nations personnel accountable for any instances of misconduct while serving in an official capacity.

30. The Movement reiterated its welcome of the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 67/19, which accorded to Palestine the status of non-member observer State in the United Nations and reflected the international community's long-standing, principled support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination, independence and a two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders. The Movement reaffirmed its support of the application by the State of Palestine for admission to full membership in the United Nations, which had been pending before the Security Council since 2011.

31. While the Movement underlined the importance of freedom of opinion and expression, as provided under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it wished to emphasize that morality, public order and the rights and freedoms of others must be recognized and respected in the exercise of that freedom, in accordance with article 29 of the same Declaration. Freedom of expression was not absolute, and it should be exercised with responsibility and in accordance with the relevant international human rights law and instruments.

32. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that dissemination of international law was one of the best means of strengthening the rule of law at the international level. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation could provide a vehicle for such dissemination, and technology could also be useful. The dissemination of international law could help to strengthen international peace and security and promote friendly relations and cooperation among States. Indeed, States had an obligation under the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1997 Additional Protocols thereto to disseminate international humanitarian law.

33. At the regional level, the African Union Commission on International Law played a valuable role in disseminating international law. The Commission was an advisory body established as part of efforts to accelerate socioeconomic development in Africa through the promotion of research in all fields. It encouraged the teaching, study, publication and dissemination of literature on international law, in particular the laws of the African Union, with a view to strengthening and promoting acceptance and respect for the principles of international law, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and respect for the Union and recourse to its organs. The work of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization offered a good example of bilateral cooperation in disseminating information and exchanging views and experiences relating to international law in order to strengthen the rule of law.

34. At the multilateral level, the United Nations played an important role in disseminating and promoting international law, and the African Group called upon the Secretariat to explore ways of further enhancing that role in order to strengthen the rule of law. The United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law contributed actively to improving knowledge of international law through the International Law Fellowship Programme, the regional courses in international law, the Audiovisual Library and the preparation and dissemination of publications and other information relating to international law. The Programme had played an important role in advancing the teaching, study and application of international law, particularly in developing countries, where it had helped to build capacity in that field. The African Group strongly supported the Programme and wished to express its appreciation of the yearly regional courses in international law for the African region, which had benefited numerous African scholars and civil servants.

35. **Ms. Beckles** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that adherence to the rule of law was crucial to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the maintenance of peace and security, the prevention of conflict, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and sustained

economic development and the eradication of poverty. In dealing with challenges such as terrorism, unprecedented migration, protracted conflicts, and other global threats, it was critically important to adhere to the rule of law and the principles of international law.

36. The Community remained unwavering in its commitment to ensure universal adherence to the rule of law at the national and international levels. Its member States had been founded on the principles of democracy, liberty, good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights and dignity; the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual were protected under their constitutions, and their legal systems included provisions that promoted equality before the law and fairness in its application. Moreover, their domestic legislation was buttressed by various international treaties and conventions that promoted the rule of law.

37. The CARICOM countries also remained committed to the implementation of effective mechanisms to enforce legal rules. The International Criminal Court played an important role in promoting the rule of law, encouraging respect for human rights and achieving sustainable peace and development. Its primary objective, however, was to help put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community and to prevent such heinous crimes. CARICOM urged all States that had not yet done so to ratify the Rome Statute of the Court and the Kampala amendments thereto. It also affirmed the important role of the International Court of Justice as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, recognizing its valuable contribution in shaping international jurisprudence and urging all Member States to support the Court's work.

38. Promotion of the rule of law at the international level must serve as the foundation for the achievement of sustainable development and the protection and sustainable management of the common heritage of humankind for the benefit of present and future generations. The Caribbean region remained highly vulnerable to the loss of marine biodiversity and the impacts of unsustainable practices on the marine environment in areas outside the national jurisdiction of Caribbean countries. The Community viewed the conclusion of a legally binding instrument to address those issues as being inextricably linked to the pursuit of justice and fairness for all. It therefore welcomed the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly resolution 69/292, on the development of a legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, and looked forward to the convening of an intergovernmental conference in 2018 to consider those recommendations.

39. A proper understanding of international law was fundamental to the promotion of international peace and security, friendly relations and cooperation among States and to the rule of law at both the national and the international levels. CARICOM recognized the significant contribution of the United Nations Programme of Assistance in fostering better understanding and appreciation of international law through its regional law courses and seminars, fellowship programmes, and dissemination of legal information. It was aware that some of the Programme's activities had been hindered by lack of adequate resources and urged all Member States that were in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions with a view to ensuring the Programme's continued effectiveness and further development.

40. **Ms. Mezdrea** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that respect for the rule of law was an essential condition for peace, stability and development. Support for the justice sector was one of the principal avenues for promoting the rule of law, democratic governance, citizen security, gender equality and respect for human rights. An effective national legal system that operated in conformity with a State's international legal obligations could help to foster political and socioeconomic stability and boost entrepreneurship and public and private sector investment.

41. The United Nations was to be commended for strengthening accountability for international crimes at the national level and for its activities to strengthen the rule of law in countries by supporting justice and security sector reforms, endeavouring to reduce criminal violence and illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, facilitating access to justice for marginalized groups and working to ensure security and justice for all, including women and girls. The European Union welcomed the Organization's efforts to promote the rule of law at the international level through the codification of an international legal framework and support for international and hybrid courts and tribunals and other international accountability mechanisms, such as the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the

Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic. It also welcomed the legal and judicial responses to issues of serious global concern, such as climate change, migration, terrorism and violent extremism, and transnational organized crime.

42. The European Union commended the Secretary-General's commitment to making United Nations rule of law assistance more effective, sustainable and coherent, particularly in the Central African Republic, Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The emphasis on targeted rule of law support to enhance real impact on the ground was especially welcome. However, given the lack of system-wide initiatives and the persistence of interoperability challenges, it would be useful for the Secretary-General to deepen his assessment and analysis, including in the context of the ongoing efforts to bring about more efficiency and reform across the areas of development, peace and security, management and counter-terrorism. In the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the rule of law dimension was essential for delivering concrete results in eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities, supporting gender equality, protecting the environment and creating just, inclusive and strong institutions.

43. Multilateral treaties played a key role in laying down common rules for all nations and strengthening a rule-based international system. Numerous websites, including the EUR-Lex database, provided information on the international treaties to which European Union member States were parties; in addition, the website of the European Court of Justice contained information on national and international case law.

44. A crucial aspect of the dissemination of international law was the promotion of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The effective implementation of the 2010 European Union Guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law remained a priority. The European Union continued to support the publication of materials and provide training to national authorities, non-State actors and humanitarian actors on international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including in countries in other regions, such as Mali and Somalia. In line with its Global Strategy, the European Union was striving to mainstream human rights in all of its security and defence operations through training for operations staff in international humanitarian law, international human rights law and gender equality. One of the best ways to strengthen the rule of law through the dissemination of international law was to assist legal professionals worldwide in enhancing their knowledge of international human rights standards as contained in international law. The European Union had supported capacity-building for that purpose.

45. The dissemination of international law could also increase the effectiveness and efficiency of international criminal justice. The European Union and its member States had a long-standing involvement in ending impunity and strengthening accountability, including through their support of the International Criminal Court and other international criminal tribunals. The European Union had sponsored numerous seminars and other events to raise awareness of the Court and, where appropriate, had supported training and assistance for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in work related to it.

46. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations (A/72/86), the European Union agreed that the regulations needed to be revised and modernized to take account of recent developments and established practices and to increase efficiency in the registration and publication of treaties. There was much substance in the report to digest, and her delegation would favour a dedicated discussion on the topic within the Sixth Committee.

47. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) said that the rule of law played an integral part in the promotion of friendly relations among nations and was indispensable for the conduct of international relations, the maintenance of international peace and security and respect for human rights. Since its founding, ASEAN had been an inclusive, rule-based community governed by the rule of law. The ASEAN Charter and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration embodied the fundamental principles of the rule of law, including respect for the peaceful settlement of disputes, democracy, good governance and the promotion and protection of human rights. The Association considered international action based on the rule of law to be crucial to the realization of globally shared commitments on sustainable development, nuclear disarmament and climate change, among other priorities.

48. Multilateral action must be carried out in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. Shared respect for the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their domestic affairs would further strengthen international commitment to

the rule of law and enhance confidence among all partners involved. Strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels required consistency, predictability and foresight. Selectivity and double standards in the application of international law must be avoided. Monitoring mechanisms for multilateral treaties should be supported so as to promote accountability and transparency in the fulfilment of international obligations.

49. ASEAN wished to commend the contribution that the United Nations Codification Division and the Treaty Section had made to the rule of law by encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification and by maintaining a well-organized register of treaties. Proper publication of treaties enhanced transparency, trust and public awareness of commitments, thereby strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels. However, the Treaty Section was operating under outdated regulations that did not take account of technological advances, which was in turn causing inefficiencies and eating up limited resources. The Secretary-General's review of the regulations giving effect to Article 102 of the Charter represented an important step in enhancing United Nations treaty practice. ASEAN was in favour of updating the relevant regulations and improving the working methods of the Treaty Section, and of the United Nations in general, in order to reduce waste and inefficiency.

50. In order to enhance respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels, national capacities must be strengthened, including through technical assistance and skills-based training and support to Member States for the implementation of multilateral treaties at the national level. ASEAN welcomed the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit in that regard. The Association also strongly supported the work of the Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law in promoting international law worldwide, thereby contributing to friendly relations among States and enhancing their ability to participate in multilateral treaty processes. Ensuring adequate financing for the Programme into the future would further strengthen respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels.

51. ASEAN had long been committed to ensuring stability and security in its region and had adopted a number of treaties to that end, including the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (1976), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (1995), the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (2002) and the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (2011). In addition, ASEAN member States continued to work with China towards the early conclusion of a code of conduct in the South China Sea. Those multilateral agreements had also strengthened economic integration and contributed to the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 and the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, a strategic plan rooted in the rule of law that sought, inter alia, to foster the full integration of the Association's member States into the global economy, thus promoting a rule-based community that was politically cohesive, culturally harmonious and socially responsible.

52. **Ms. McDougall** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the rule of law was central to the maintenance of international peace and security, to the prevention of conflict, to the promotion of human rights and to justice and accountability. The rule of law must underpin collective responses to complex global issues, including terrorism, climate change, and intractable conflicts and the ensuing humanitarian crises.

53. The maintenance of an international rule-based order depended on the international community's ability to establish, shape and ensure compliance with international law, which in turn required effective dissemination thereof, including through capacity-building, information-sharing, and clear and coherent development of customary international law. To that end, it was important to publish States' views on the application of international law and of State practice and to ensure that commentaries and court decisions reflected the views of States. The United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law was another important means of disseminating international law.

54. The importance of respecting international humanitarian law in an era of protracted armed conflicts could not be overstated. Australia, Canada and New Zealand were each working to strengthen adherence to international humanitarian law through training, funding and advocacy and through the provision of technical and financial assistance to other Member States. They saw civil society and academia as vital partners in that work. Accountability was a crucial element of the rule of law. All Member States should be able to participate in the development and reinforcement of international legal norms and institutions that promoted accountability, such as the

International Criminal Court. Member States' assistance to initiatives such as the Court's Trust Fund for the Participation of Least Developed Countries helped to ensure meaningful access for all.

55. The Committee should align its consideration of the rule of law with efforts to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16, which explicitly recognized the importance of the rule of law and its role in underpinning peace, development and human rights. She hoped that that focus would be reflected in the rule of law resolution to be adopted by the Committee at the current session.

56. **Mr. Petersen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that attempts to undermine the rule-based international order underscored the need to increase the dissemination of international law, strengthen the rule of law and safeguard and promote the full enjoyment of human rights for all. The rule of law was firmly interrelated with the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development — and with democracy. Conflicts and atrocities, acts of terrorism, violent extremism and attacks on democratic governance and effective legal systems continued to pose challenges to the rule of law, as did major global concerns such as climate change and mass human displacement. The interlinkages between climate change, environmental degradation and conflict were becoming more broadly understood and recognized as threats not only to peace but, increasingly, also to overall social and economic development. It was therefore important to take a comprehensive approach to current global problems and to base all responses on the rule of law.

57. A stronger and more concrete commitment to the protection of human rights and democracy was needed in order to meet current international challenges. It was important to remember that the rule of law was both a principle of good governance, encompassing democracy and human rights, and an indispensable means for achieving crucial common goals, including peace and security, equality and the promotion of economic and social development. It was also important to reaffirm that all persons were equal before the law and that everyone was entitled to equal protection under the law.

58. The Nordic countries commended the efforts of the Office of Legal Affairs to further the dissemination of international law in order to strengthen the rule of law. They also wished to pay tribute to the International Law Commission for its strong contribution to the rule of law through its work on the progressive development and codification of international law. The rule of law was considered a key determinant of the quality of governance in a country. Assistance to justice systems worldwide in the dissemination of knowledge about international law, including human rights law and standards, was crucial for strengthening a rule-based order, as was United Nations support for government efforts to achieve sustainable development and economic growth. The Nordic countries relied on a stable, rule-based foundation for international cooperation and were therefore strong advocates for the rule of law through their multilateral and bilateral collaboration activities and their strategic partnerships.

59. Member States should strive to build consensus and work in solidarity with each other to address the most pressing priorities outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/72/268). They should also foster partnerships and cooperation to ensure effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its rule of law objectives. The 2030 Agenda provided a framework for linking the rule of law work more concretely to the goals of eliminating poverty and inequalities and creating just, inclusive and strong institutions.

60. Fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community were fundamental pillars of the rule of law. To achieve lasting peace, those responsible for violations of international law, including violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses, must be held accountable. The Nordic countries were strong proponents of the International Criminal Court as a complement to national courts and also strongly supported the work of other international courts and tribunals in fighting impunity and in promoting access to justice and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Nordic countries had all contributed or pledged to contribute financially to the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic and encouraged other States to do likewise in order to enable the Mechanism to fulfil its important task of collecting, preserving and categorizing evidence for future investigations and trials.

61. **Mr. Kickert** (Austria) said that, as coordinator of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, his delegation was pleased that the Secretary-General had continued to place high priority on the rule of law and agreed that the United Nations must do more to support Member States in implementing the elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development related to the rule of law. It commended the Secretary-General's call

for a frank and open dialogue with Member States to reflect upon how to improve the effectiveness of United Nations rule of law assistance and requested that his next report should lay out concrete measures for accomplishing that objective. Austria encouraged United Nations entities to enhance coordination and coherence among the three pillars, for example through the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and Other Crisis Situations, which had served to increase operational coherence on the ground. It also called on Member States to work with the Secretariat to strengthen partnerships and cooperation, improve the availability of technical expertise and enhance the support provided by the United Nations.

62. A rule-based international system with clear and predictable rules was an essential precondition for lasting peace, security, economic development and social progress. All Member States should actively promote an international order based on the rule of law and international law, with the United Nations at its core, which meant ratifying and implementing international human rights treaties and other relevant international agreements and settling disputes by peaceful means, including through recourse to the International Court of Justice. They should also work harder to ensure compliance with international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law, and increase prevention efforts, put a stop to mass atrocities and ensure that perpetrators were brought to justice, including through international criminal justice mechanisms. Accountability and the fight against impunity for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law were central to rebuilding post-conflict societies and ensuring lasting peace.

63. Lastly, his delegation wished to commend the work of the Office of Legal Affairs and the Treaty Section in disseminating international law and to welcome the Secretary-General's thorough review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter.

64. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that challenges to peace and security called for a strengthening of the international legal order. In that regard, he wished to highlight the significance of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Liechtenstein was a signatory to that agreement and was committed to helping to ensure that its full potential was realized. Criminalizing the most serious forms of the illegal use of force by activating the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression in December 2017 would be another landmark development for the rule of law at the international level. Liechtenstein would continue working with other States parties to the Rome Statute of the Court with a view to ensuring a smooth activation process, garnering the strongest possible political acceptance and preserving the integrity of the Kampala amendments. Establishing individual criminal accountability for one of the most serious offences against international law would complement the prohibition of the illegal use of force under the Charter of the United Nations.

65. The United Nations had developed a strong track record in the area of criminal justice and had demonstrated its ability to ensure accountability for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Significant impunity gaps remained, however. The hopes for a dynamic and productive relationship between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court had largely been unfulfilled, and there was little reason to expect that situation to change in the near future.

66. Nevertheless, the Secretariat and, more recently, the General Assembly had taken innovative and promising steps towards greater accountability. The establishment of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic was the most recent illustration of the Assembly's potential to play a productive role. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the United Nations membership had voted in favour of the Mechanism spoke for itself. His delegation was encouraged by the strong political and financial support that States had given to the Mechanism in recent months and looked forward to further accountability work within the General Assembly, given the profound disagreements in the Security Council on the matter.

67. In comparison with military interventions and peacekeeping missions, activities to ensure justice were inexpensive. Moreover, they represented investments in sustainable peace and thus sustainable development. Holding perpetrators accountable facilitated the reconciliation of societies, brought stability and prevented violence. His delegation strongly believed that such mechanisms should be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations, and it would therefore work with like-minded delegations and the Secretary-General to ensure such funding, particularly for the Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic.

68. **Mr. Heumann** (Israel) said that Israel ascribed great importance to the rule of law, which was key to the promotion of stability and human rights and to the achievement of sustainable development. At the

national level, the rule of law was the essence of any democracy. Good governance, checks and balances and a robust, independent and impartial judiciary were indispensable for the proper maintenance of the rule of law.

69. From the outset, Israel had been a diverse country composed of many different cultural, religious and ethnic groups, a fact which had made it all the more important to guarantee and uphold democratic principles. The principle of equality before the law and other democratic values formed the cornerstone of its governmental system and ensured that minority rights were respected, allowing all cultural, ethnic and religious groups to coexist and thrive. Israel was a party to all major human rights treaties, which reflected its unwavering commitment to human rights, as did its extensive domestic legislation on the subject, which it continually reviewed and sought to improve. As part of the preparation of its report for the Universal Periodic Review, the Government had conducted an internal review that had brought together government officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics and civil society to discuss various human rights issues. Those discussions had provided an important opportunity for policymakers to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by different groups in Israeli society.

70. Israel had maintained its strong and consistent commitment to democracy and human rights, despite the fact that it had had to defend itself against threats to its existence since its inception. Its commitment to the rule of law and to the security of all its citizens had created dilemmas and difficult situations, however. The careful consideration given to security issues was evident from the number of security-related matters brought before the Supreme Court. The Court continually conducted rigorous scrutiny and review of parliamentary legislation, executive policy and administrative action. Its recent review of the country's legislation and policies on illegal immigration was just one example of the ongoing judicial oversight of legislative processes, which was especially important in relation to matters that raised both national policy and security concerns and basic human rights issues.

71. The justice system was also tasked with ensuring that the rule of law was upheld during and after military operations. An independent public commission of inquiry set up in 2010, which included highly reputed foreign observers, had carefully reviewed the mechanisms in place for investigating complaints of alleged violations of the law of armed conflict. The commission had concluded that those mechanisms generally complied with the country's obligations under international law and that its system ranked favourably with those of other democratic countries. The commission had made various recommendations for improvement of the investigation system, however, and a governmental team had prepared a detailed report on the practical implementation of those recommendations, which had been embraced by the Israeli Government in July 2017.

72. The strength of a justice system could be measured in part by the diversity of those it employed, as diversity was key in ensuring that the needs of various groups were taken into account. In September 2017, Justice Esther Hayut had been appointed as President of the Israeli Supreme Court, the third woman to hold the position, and a majority of positions in the Ministry of Justice were held by women. Members of various minority groups also served as judges, prosecutors and legal advisers. In order to ensure real access to justice, both citizens and non-citizens had standing before the Supreme Court and were allowed to petition the Court directly, as a court of first instance, in matters relating to civil and human rights and due process. Financial support was provided to litigants who could not afford legal representation.

73. His delegation supported the ongoing United Nations activities and initiatives for capacity-building and technical assistance as detailed in the Secretary-General's report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations the rule of law activities (A/72/268). Israel had been intensively engaged in providing similar technical assistance in many regions around the world. The Israeli Public Defender's Office had recently carried out projects in several countries around the world, under the auspices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to build and promote public defender offices and thereby support the rule of law on a global level. The Israeli Government also cooperated closely with African and Eastern European countries in capacity-building efforts and had organized training sessions for judges, prosecutors and investigators on topics relating to counter-terrorism. It believed that those activities, too, contributed to the further development of the rule of law.

74. Maintaining the rule of law at the international level required an effective multilateral system founded on international law. His delegation supported the work of the International Law Commission and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law in the development of international law. Multilateral treaties contributed to stability, transparency and legal certainty and were thus a valuable tool for promoting

the rule of law. With regard to the contribution of international tribunals to the rule of law, his delegation joined others in emphasizing the importance of the principle of complementarity and stressed that States had the primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting violations of international law. International tribunals could, however, make a real contribution through the quality of their legal decisions, their capacity to strengthen the rule of law in the arenas in which they operated and their ability to reject attempts to politicize issues and preserve their reputation as independent and professional bodies.

75. Referring to the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, he expressed regret that some members of the Committee insisted on injecting political elements into the important debate on the rule of law.

76. **Ms. Carnal** (Switzerland) said that Member States had a fundamental role in ensuring respect for the rule of law and thereby helping to build sustainable peace and prevent conflicts. States also had the primary responsibility for prosecuting international crimes; in accordance with the principle of complementarity, an international court should intervene only if a State was unable to prosecute such crimes. It was therefore fundamental to strengthen national courts, and her delegation therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to that process.

77. She was pleased to see that the current year's report identified some areas in which United Nations rule of law assistance could be more effective, coherent and sustainable. Her delegation would be grateful, however, if the 2018 report put forward more specific recommendations on how the Organization would assist Member States in strengthening the rule of law at the national level, particularly in fragile or conflict-affected States. At a time of limited resources, it was especially important to provide coherent and effective rule of law assistance. It would be useful to include a subtopic on how to address that need or on the rule of law elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the agenda for the next session.

78. The fight against impunity was fundamental for the implementation of the rule of law. In that regard, she wished to underline the importance of the International Criminal Court. Her delegation was committed to achieving universal ratification of the Rome Statute, and it therefore called on Burundi to reverse its decision to withdraw from the Court before that action took effect on 27 October. Switzerland would welcome an unconditional activation of the Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression at the next Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute. In situations where the rule of law was ignored, creative solutions were sometimes necessary, such as the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, which Switzerland welcomed and encouraged Member States to support.

79. **Mr. Celarie Landaverde** (El Salvador), expressing thanks for the support his country had received from the United Nations to strengthen its justice sector, reduce violence and improve public safety, said that El Salvador had been afflicted by violence caused by criminal elements who had sought to terrorize the country's population and weaken its institutions by attacking its judges, law enforcement officials and members of its armed forces. In response, the Government had implemented a security strategy that reflected its commitment to respect for human rights. The strategy prioritized comprehensive victim assistance and preventive action aimed especially at discouraging youths from joining gangs. The strategy was the result of consultation with various sectors of society and had been formulated by a national council comprising representatives of the Government, the private sector, churches, the media, civil society and the international community.

80. Despite those efforts, the Secretary-General's report (A/72/268) listed El Salvador as one of the countries where armed violence and widespread human rights violations were perpetrated by State actors. His Government could not accept that characterization, given the strict controls and the programmes it had implemented in the area of human rights. If ever there was an isolated case of a public official acting outside the law, administrative and judicial mechanisms were in place to determine who was responsible and impose sanctions. Furthermore, an inter-agency coordinating mechanism had been set up to strengthen internal controls in the country's security institutions. In addition to representatives of various government ministries, the country's Human Rights Advocate, members of civil society and representatives of international organizations formed part of the mechanism.

81. His delegation welcomed the Committee's approach to the topic of the rule of law at the current session and recommended that a similar approach should be applied in future sessions. In particular, it welcomed the opportunity to explore ways and means of further disseminating international law to strengthen the rule of law, which could contribute to better fulfilment of international obligations. One way of disseminating international law was through publication of the registry of States' ratifications of

international treaties. El Salvador had ratified a number of treaties relating to international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international commercial law, among other matters. It was also a party to various multilateral instruments and cooperation agreements, information about which could be accessed by the public through electronic portals.

82. It was important to disseminate information about international law among both national officials and the general public. In El Salvador, officials working in the justice sector, in particular, played an important role in promoting and enhancing knowledge of international law and in applying the provisions of international treaties in judicial opinions, which helped to strengthen the rule of law and demonstrate the country's commitment to the international community. It was also important to disseminate international law among members of the legislative and executive branches. Indeed, in a recent ruling on the unconstitutionality of an amnesty law, the Constitutional Court of El Salvador had affirmed that lawmakers must take into account the country's international obligations under treaties relating to human rights and international humanitarian law.

83. The dissemination of international law in the academic and civil society sectors was equally important. In El Salvador specialized courses on the subject had been offered to members of the President's staff, defence and law enforcement officials, maritime authorities and faculty of the School of International Relations at the University of El Salvador. Systematic, widespread dissemination of information about the country's international obligations would lead to better fulfilment of those commitments and enhance legal certainty at the national and international levels, thus reinforcing the rule of law.

84. Mr. Elsadig Ali Sayed **Ahmed** (Sudan) said that respect for the rule of law at the international and national levels was indispensable for the maintenance of international peace and security and for socioeconomic development. His Government attached paramount importance to the rule of law and continually reviewed domestic legislation to ensure that it was consistent with international conventions and standards. It also carried out capacity-building activities to enable national authorities to fulfil their responsibilities with regard to the rule of law.

85. Notwithstanding his delegation's opinion on the substance of the declaration adopted in 2012 by the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law, it recognized that that gathering had marked a milestone in the General Assembly's consideration of the topic and an important step towards arriving at a common understanding and vision of the rule of law at the national and international levels. Respect for the principles and rules of international law was essential for the maintenance of the rule of law at the international level, and his delegation called upon all Member States, particularly those that were members of the Security Council, to renew their obligation to respect, defend and promote the Charter and international law.

86. His delegation also called upon Member States to settle disputes by peaceful means through the mechanisms and instruments established by international law, including the International Court of Justice and the various regional and international arbitration mechanisms. Likewise, in order to create a transparent and legal framework for balanced international relations, the General Assembly and the Security Council should exercise their prerogative under Article 96 of the Charter to seek advisory opinions from the Court on legal questions.

87. In order to raise awareness of international law at the national level and enable legal professionals to stay abreast of the latest developments in the field, the Secretariat should redouble its technical assistance and capacity-building efforts through the Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. At the same time, it should avoid promoting one-size-fits-all models by facilitating the sharing of successful national experiences in strengthening the rule of law. A mechanism for systematic interaction between the Rule of Law Unit and the General Assembly should be put in place in order to keep Member States informed of the Unit's activities. With regard to the Unit's data collection activities, his delegation could not accept any rule of law indicators that had not been agreed by Member States in open consultations.

88. His delegation believed it was important to speak openly when it saw that the international justice system was being used to politicize matters or advance political agendas that had nothing to do with preventing impunity. It had become clear that the International Criminal Court operated on the basis of selectivity and double standards, which hindered the pursuit of its noble goals.

89. In conclusion, his delegation wished to underline the importance of respect by all Member States for the respective prerogatives and mandates of the various United Nations organs, especially the General Assembly.

90. **Mr. Mounsaveng** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the principle of equality before the law formed the foundation for fairness, which could help to ensure the maintenance of peace, stability and social order, both domestically and internationally. Without the rule of law, chaos, disorder and social instability would ensue, creating an environment in which all manner of social evils, including crime, corruption and human rights abuses, could thrive. The Lao People's Democratic Republic attached great importance to the principles and norms of international law. With a view to expanding its relations and cooperation with the international community, it had become a party to over 900 international treaties, conventions and agreements in various areas, including more than 450 multilateral instruments adopted by the United Nations and other international and regional organizations. During the current year's treaty event, it had deposited its instrument of accession to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Lao People's Democratic Republic had consistently supported the settlement of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

91. Domestically, the country continued to adopt and amend legislation to meet requirements contained in multilateral treaties and enable it to implement them in good faith. In addition to laws enacted by the National Assembly, presidential and ministerial decrees and provincial regulations formed part of the national framework for developing and promoting the rule of law in the country. His Government believed that the rule of law was essential for the advancement of peace and security, development and human rights and was committed to working with fellow Member States, international organizations and other partners to promote it at the national and the international levels.

92. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that the rule of law at the national and international levels was essential for building and maintaining peace, preventing conflict and creating a climate conducive to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations played a key role in encouraging the rule of law by supporting capacity-building and the exchange of best practices at the national level. The vision of the Charter of the United Nations remained as relevant as it had been in 1945, and the United Nations remained the best hope for the rule of law at the international level.

93. His delegation reaffirmed its support for the landmark declaration adopted in 2012 by the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law, which had highlighted the need for stronger international cooperation to dismantle illicit networks, counter the world drug problem and suppress transnational organized crime, all of which threatened human rights and the security of societies and States and undermined sustainable development by flouting the rule of law. Both the declaration of the high-level meeting and the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes also underscored the collective duty to settle disputes by peaceful means.

94. International law was the great equalizer among States. It gave a voice to all nations, regardless of their political, economic or military clout. Anchored in the multilateral treaty system, international law sought to bind the community of nations and prevent anarchy in the global order, without subjugation or submission. International law was equally essential to the rule of law at the national level, where it was an instrument for justice and a precondition for inclusive development. Systems such as colonialism created slave economies and led to economic development that benefited only the masters. At the national level, international law was important for norm- and standard-setting, access to and delivery of justice and the protection of human rights that were threatened by aggression from abroad or oppression at home. International law conferred universality to national law and made it intellectually and morally compelling. At the same time, national law gave practical effect to international law.

95. A rule of law culture should be encouraged during children's formative years so that it would be internalized, since law abidance was an acquired behaviour, not a basic instinct. Schoolchildren should be introduced to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and their moral education should continue through exposure to increasingly complex topics such as the rights of marginalized groups and international humanitarian law. Law schools should offer more specialized training in various dimensions of international law, such as the law of the sea, international criminal law and trade law.

96. Academic institutions, law firms and Governments should support regional cooperation on international law, as exemplified by the United Nations regional courses on international law. States should consider including private lawyers in their national delegations to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law as a means of enlarging their repertoire of legal techniques and enriching domestic jurisprudence. The establishment of international law

societies open to academics and non-academics and to lawyers and non-lawyers should be encouraged, as should the exchange of experience and best practices among judges and police and security officials, particularly in relation to counter-terrorism. Lastly, the United Nations should spotlight one key multilateral treaty during each high-level meeting of the General Assembly and establish a tradition of holding a signing ceremony for a major international agreement, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2016.

97. **Mr. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that the current situation at the international level had shown that the rule of law remained the key to the success of international efforts to achieve the objectives for which the United Nations had been established. The international community had adopted numerous international treaties aimed at fostering peace and stability in international relations. Those instruments underscored the importance of the rule of law and called on countries to meet their obligations at the national and international levels. Nevertheless, regional and international conflicts, tension and crises, with their attendant burden of suffering, persisted. Despite numerous conflicts, the international community remained convinced that international relations should be based on the rule of law.

98. The international community had recognized that the rule of law could not prevail unless dignity and human rights were protected and unless international law was respected in international relations. Qatar was committed to the principles of the rule of law and continued to demonstrate its commitment at both the national and the international level. At the national level, government institutions were careful to respect the rule of law as an essential means of promoting good governance and achieving equality and justice for all citizens and residents of the country. It attached particular importance to strengthening the relevant State institutions and putting in place a domestic legal framework that was consistent with international standards.

99. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, relations between States should be governed by the rule of law and the principles of equality and mutual respect and adherence to the principles of international law. The behaviour of countries should be consistent with international law and with all the obligations that it entailed. It was important to put in place monitoring mechanisms to ensure that countries fulfilled those obligations.

100. The use of coercion in international relations, usurping the sovereign rights of States and attempting to intervene in their internal affairs, was a flagrant violation of the rule of law at the international level. Respect for the sovereignty of States was the cornerstone of international relations based on the rule of law. The imposition of unilateral measures outside the framework of the United Nations was also a clear violation of international law and represented a threat to the international community as a whole. Such actions undermined the mandate of the Security Council, which was the sole organ empowered to impose sanctions under the Charter. Moreover, they fuelled conflict and enabled terrorist organizations to advance their illegal objectives by exploiting the lack of coordination between countries imposing such measures and their targets.

101. The Government of Qatar was convinced that respect for the rule of law was a sine qua non for international peace and security and for development, and would continue to cooperate with the international community in fostering the rule of law by contributing to the peaceful settlement of disputes at the international and regional levels, in keeping with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. At the regional level, it would continue to do its utmost to support the work of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre in Doha, which was playing an important role in efforts to combat corruption and promote the rule of law.

102. **Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he wished to object to statements made by the representatives of Liechtenstein and several others with regard to the so-called International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic. He would remind those representatives that General Assembly resolution 71/248, through which the Mechanism had been established, had not enjoyed consensus and that, furthermore, it had been adopted under conditions that were neither transparent nor honest. The resolution was the result of political machinations by Liechtenstein and a State that was a known supporter of terrorism. He invited all delegations to read the letter that his delegation had addressed to the Secretary-General (A/71/799), in which it had detailed the glaring legal shortcomings in the General Assembly resolution and the manner in which it had been adopted and in the Mechanism itself. The letter had also highlighted the dangerous political objectives that had motivated Liechtenstein and Qatar to mount the effort to set up the illegal mechanism.

103. The establishment of the Mechanism had hindered the national and political reconciliation efforts under way in Geneva and Astana. Furthermore, 80 per cent of the voluntary funds collected under the Mechanism had come from the Government of Qatar, which was supporting terrorism in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Head of State of that country had stated clearly and unequivocally that they believed that the Security Council's classification of the Nusrah Front as a terrorist organization should be reviewed, which was tantamount to declaring support for that organization and its barbarous activities on Syrian territory. He called upon the representative of Qatar to stop using United Nations forums to raise the profile of the Mechanism and its activities. The representative would do better to talk about the money-laundering activities of the oil and gas industry, in which both Qatar and Liechtenstein were complicit. Indeed, some of the money laundered through Liechtenstein was being used to purchase weapons that then fell into the hands of terrorists in the Syrian Arab Republic, who used them to destroy infrastructure and kill civilians.

104. The principles of international law were an indivisible whole. Countries could not pick and choose which ones to uphold. Those who thumbed their noses at Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and formed illicit partnerships while pretending to champion human rights clearly had a hidden agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.